

**City of Columbus  
Fats, Oils, and Grease (FOG) Reduction Program**

**Why Did the City of Columbus Need a FOG Reduction Program?**

A leading cause of sewer blockages across the U.S. is the accumulation of FOG in the sanitary sewers. The greasy waste enters the sewers through connections from homes, food service operations (FSO), and industrial wastewater dischargers.

FOG blockages may cause sanitary sewer overflows into local waterways and backups into basements of nearby homes and businesses. When homeowners have to hire a plumber to remove grease from their sewer service line, rates vary from \$200 --\$400 the first hour for response, with additional charges for extra time and after-hours service calls.

A basic grease blockage service call costs the Columbus Division of Sewerage and Drainage (DOSD) at least \$2,000 to respond. If the blockage causes a sewer overflow, the City must pay fines for the discharge into the environment. The maintenance costs associated with the blockages are passed along to all sewer rate payers. These additional costs would be unnecessary if the problem did not exist. Clearly, the prevention of grease entering our sewers is the key to solving the problem.

**FOG Reduction Program Overview**

DOSD developed a FOG Reduction Program consisting of four main elements outlined below. These changes apply to all FSO located within the City of Columbus and to the 25 municipalities that contract with the City of Columbus for wastewater treatment.

- Columbus City Code Chapter 1145.04 requires that whenever fats, oils, and grease separation is required, the applicant shall provide all necessary documents to Building and Zoning Services for plan approval. Gravity (exterior) grease interceptors, hydro-mechanical grease interceptors, and automatic grease removal devices are permitted.
- Columbus City Code Chapter 1145.20 (B) requires all FSO in the City's service area to develop and implement a FOG BMP to handle FOG-laden wastes. A key element of the FOG BMP requires FSO to maintain a Grease Interceptor Cleaning Log.
- Director's Rule 08--01 establishes grease interceptor cleaning practices for trucked waste haulers licensed with the City of Columbus. The rule also requires licensed trucked waste haulers to completely fill out the FSO Grease Interceptor Cleaning Log(s) or to communicate the pertinent information to personnel of the FSO.
- Director's Rule 15--04 establishes a minimum cost recovery charge of \$2,000.00 per typical blockage incident attributed to the improper disposal of grease. Cost recovery assessments for sewer blockages requiring more than four hours of effort to correct could be higher.

## Definitions

- **FOG BMP** – Fats, Oils, and Grease Best Management Plan
- **Gravity Grease Interceptor** – a device located underground and outside of a food service facility designed to collect, contain or remove food wastes and grease from the wastewater while allowing the balance of the liquid waste to discharge to the wastewater collection system by gravity. Gravity grease interceptors shall have at least one inspection hatch on the top surface to facilitate inspection, cleaning and maintenance.
- **Hydro mechanical Grease Interceptor** – a device located inside a food service facility or under a sink designed to collect, contain or remove food wastes and grease from the wastewater while allowing the balance of the liquid waste to discharge to the wastewater collection system by gravity. Hydro mechanical grease interceptors shall have a removable lid on the top surface to facilitate inspection, cleaning and maintenance.
- **Automatic Grease Removal Device** - A plumbing appurtenance that is installed in the sanitary drainage system to intercept free-floating fats, oils and grease from waste water discharge. Such a device operates on a time- or event-controlled basis and has the ability to remove free-floating fats, oils and grease automatically without intervention from the user except for maintenance.
- **Food Service Operation (FSO)** – a commercial facility engaged in preparing or serving food for consumption by the public, such as but not limited to: restaurant, commercial kitchen, cafeterias, nightclubs, delicatessen, meat cutting-preparation, bakeries, bagel shops, grocery stores, caterer, hotel, school, hospital, correctional facility or care institution.

**Instructions for the FOG BMP** (Please note, all examples are illustrative and are not necessarily applicable for your facility)

### **Item 1 – List FOG sources:**

- Food preparation
- Grease from cooking – grill troughs, deep fryer, hood filters, etc.
- Food wastes – fats and grease from meats, salad dressings, butter, oils, etc.
- Kitchen utensils and equipment
- Kitchen cleaning and maintenance

### **Item 2 – Handling/cleaning/facility practices to minimize discharge of FOG or buildup in sewer lines:**

- All new employees will review FOG BMP
- "No Grease" signs have been posted above the three-compartment sink and mop sinks
- Employees have been instructed to scrape all food wastes into the trash

- Employees have been instructed to use paper towels to wipe FOG from kitchen equipment and serving ware prior to washing.
- Employees have been instructed to dump waste FOG into proper barrel or receptacle for off-site disposal.
- Implementation of menu changes (such as changing to baked fries) to limit FOG generation.
- Employees have been instructed to conserve water; this will allow the grease interceptor to work more efficiently
- Employees have been trained to use the proper concentrations of cleaners and soaps to improve grease interceptor effectiveness.

**Item 3 – List routine inspection and maintenance procedures of the grease interceptor, including any contract cleaning company used and grease interceptor cleaning frequency. Attach a copy of the manufacturer's Operations and Maintenance procedures for the grease interceptor(s) if available:**

- The condition of the grease interceptor(s) will be checked each time it is cleaned. If the condition is not satisfactory, the Facility Manager will be notified.
- The cleaning frequency should be based on the manufacturer's instructions and the rate of grease and solids buildup in the interceptor(s). Weekly or even daily cleaning may be appropriate for many hydro mechanical grease interceptor applications. Frequent cleaning of hydro mechanical grease interceptors will improve efficiency and significantly reduce odors by not allowing wastes in the interceptor to become septic.
- For new and remodeled FSO the designed service interval shall not exceed 30 days between services for concrete gravity units or 90 days between services for units constructed of materials resistant to degradation associated to the pH levels in the effluent or the hydrogen sulfide gas byproducts.
- If a contract cleaning company is used, please provide the name of the vendor and the frequency in which the grease interceptor is cleaned.
- The manufacturer's recommendations or instructions for proper operation and maintenance of the grease interceptor(s) shall be kept with the FOG BMP if available. If recommendations or instructions from the manufacturer are not available, the FSO shall develop operation and maintenance procedures based on best professional judgment. See below for instructions to aid development of Operations and Maintenance procedures when the manufacturer's instructions are not available.

Developing Operations and Maintenance Procedures without Manufacturer's Instructions

*Hydro mechanical Grease Interceptors*

- The Plumbing & Drainage Institute (1998, Revised 2010). Guide To Grease Interceptors: Eliminating the Mystery. Retrieved from: [Guide-To-Grease-Interceptors.pdf \(sqspcdn.com\)](https://www.sqspcdn.com/Guide-To-Grease-Interceptors.pdf)

### *Gravity Grease Interceptors*

- National Precast Concrete Association. Operation and Maintenance for Precast Concrete Grease Interceptors. Retrieved from: [https://precast.org/wp-content/uploads/041924\\_Resources\\_BPGravityGreaseInterceptor.pdf](https://precast.org/wp-content/uploads/041924_Resources_BPGravityGreaseInterceptor.pdf)

### *All Grease Interceptors*

- The City of Columbus has established a Hydrocarbon FOG local limit of 200 parts per million.
- The City of Columbus recommends maintenance when a grease interceptor nears, but does not exceed 25% capacity.

### **Certification Statement**

An Authorized Facility Representative shall sign their name, title and date. Note: FOG BMP, Grease Interceptor Cleaning Log(s) and other associated documentation must be maintained on-site and available for review upon request by Columbus Public Health and DOSD personnel.

### **Instructions for the Grease Interceptor Cleaning Log**

Following each cleaning event, the following information must be recorded on the Grease Interceptor Cleaning Log: date cleaned; gallons or percent of grease and solids removed; and grease interceptor condition.

#### **Date Cleaned**

- A facility representative or the contract cleaning company shall record the date the grease interceptor was cleaned.

#### **Gallons or Percent of Grease and Solids Removed**

- Record the gallons or percent of grease and solids removed - not the total volume of liquid removed.

#### **Grease Interceptor Condition**

- Each time the grease interceptor is cleaned, inspect and record the condition of the interceptor on the log as "satisfactory or unsatisfactory". If the condition is "unsatisfactory," indicate what steps have been taken to correct the condition.

Following ten cleaning events, the Certification Statement is signed and a new Grease Interceptor Cleaning Log is started. **All Grease Interceptor Cleaning Log(s) shall be kept with the FOG BMP for a minimum of three years.**

## **Certification Statement**

- An Authorized Facility Representative shall sign their name, title and date after ten cleaning events. Note: FOG BMP, Grease Interceptor Cleaning Log(s) and other associated documentation must be maintained on-site and available for review upon request by Columbus Public Health and DOSD personnel.

### **For More Information:**

- Please visit [columbus.gov/utilities/FOG](https://columbus.gov/utilities/FOG)

### **Contact the Division of Sewerage and Drainage, Industrial Pretreatment Program:**

- Email: [FOG@columbus.gov](mailto:FOG@columbus.gov)
- Phone: (614) 645-5876