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Fats, Oils, and Grease (FOG) Control Program Best Management Practices City of Florence

Fats, oils, and grease (FOG) are by-products that food service establishments (FSEs) must constantly manage. Grease Control Best Management Practices (BMPs) are practices that will reduce the amount of fats, oils, and grease (FOG), which enter the sewer system from your FSE. The sanitary sewer system is neither designed nor equipped to handle FOG that accumulates on the city's wastewater collection pipes. In fact, FOG is a major contributor to sanitary sewer overflows (SSO's) caused by blockages which adversely affect the environment. The best way to manage FOG is to keep it out of the plumbing systems. The following are suggestions for proper FOG management.

Employee Training and Awareness

The success of a food service establishment's BMP program is largely dependent upon the employees. To promote effective employee implementation:

- Train employees on the BMPs that have been adopted for their establishment which includes a New Employee Training Program, as well as, a Frequent Refresher Training Program. All Food Service Establishments should instruct employees not to pour FOG down the drain and not to use sinks to dispose of food scraps.
- Post "No Grease" signs above sinks and on the front of dishwashers. Signs should be written in the language(s) that is/are commonly spoken by employees.
- Disconnect or minimize the use of garbage disposals and use "dry" clean-up methods. Operators can reduce FOG discharge up to 50 percent by disconnecting garbage disposals and scraping food into the trash.
- Retain or install a fine meshed screen (1/8-inch and 3/16-inch screen openings are recommended) in the drain of each kitchen, mop, and hand sink. Clean drain screens frequently by placing collected material into the garbage.
- Instruct staff to be conservative about their use of fats, oils, and grease in food preparation and service.
- Use absorbents under Colanders in sinks, or catch excess meat fat when draining to be disposed of in the garbage or transported to the grease rendering bin.
- Do not put food or liquid food, including dairy products, milkshake syrups, batters, or gravy down the drain.

Dry Clean-up

Remove food waste with “dry” methods such as scraping, wiping, or sweeping before using “wet” methods that use water. Wet methods typically wash the water and waste materials into the drains where it eventually collects on the interior walls of drainage pipes. To practice dry clean-up:

- Use rubber scrapers to remove food particles, fats, oils, and grease from cookware, utensils, chafing dishes, and serving ware. Then place the removed food particles and FOG in the garbage.
- Use paper towels to wipe down all work areas. Cloth towels will eventually end up in your drains from towel washing/rinsing.
- Use food grade paper to soak up oil and grease under fryer baskets.
- Use sand, sawdust, cat litter, salt, paper towels, etc. to absorb spills then sweep and dispose of the accumulated materials in the garbage.

Spill Prevention and Clean-Up

Preventing spills reduces the amount of waste on food preparation and serving areas that will require clean-up. In addition, a dry workplace is safer for employees in avoiding slips, trips, and falls. For spill prevention:

- Educate kitchen staff of the importance of keeping outside grease rendering bins covered at all times. During storms, uncovered or partially covered barrels allow storm water to enter the barrel resulting in oil running onto the ground and possibly into storm drains, and in affect can “contaminate” the rendered grease
- Empty containers, before they are full, to avoid spills.
- Use a cover when transporting liquid materials, particularly liquid wastes containing fats, oils, and grease.
- Provide employees with proper tools (e.g. ladles, ample containers, etc.) to transport materials without spilling.
- Do not leave grease transporting containers outside.

Practice effective spill containment and clean-up. Spills of dry ingredients should be swept-up or vacuumed to prevent washing them into sinks or floor drains. For FOG spills:

- Block off all sinks and floor drains near the spill if the spill occurs inside. Block off storm drains near the spill if the spill occurs outside.
- Cover the spill with absorbent material (e.g. sand, saw dust, cat litter, salt, paper towels, etc.)
- Remove spilled material and place it in the garbage.
- Use wet clean-up methods only to remove trace residues.

Food Service Establishments should develop and post their spill response procedures and maintain spill containment and absorbent supplies.

Dishwashing and Equipment Cleaning

Proper dishwashing and cleaning methods can reduce the entry of solids and FOG into the Sanitary Sewer System. These methods include:

- Scrape or wipe FOG, and other food residue from cookware, utensils, etc. before washing or placing in the dishwasher.
- Use disposable paper products, rather than dishware, to minimize or eliminate dishwashing.
- Pre-washing dishes and cookware with hot water and no soap, prior to the dishwasher can reduce the discharge of FOG by 25 percent. Use a 3-compartment sink for ware washing by utilizing the pre-wash compartment or a pre-wash sink, normally attached to a dishwasher. Fixtures used for this purpose must be connected to a grease interceptor.
- Prior to washing deep fat fryers, use a rubber spatula to squeegee down the sides, while grease and oil are still warm, and then wipe the fryer with paper towels. Dispose the paper towels into the trash
- Before washing grill and roaster/broiler drip pans, empty their contents into a waste grease container, and then wipe them with paper towels.
- Pour all liquid grease and oil from pots and pans into a waste grease container and then scrape out solidified grease into the trash.
- Capture accumulated oil, during the cleaning of stoves and ventilation/exhaust hoods, and dispose of it in the garbage, after absorbing all of the free liquid.
- Use detergents, not soaps. (soap contains oil)
- Routinely clean exhaust hoods because FOG can escape through the kitchen exhaust system, accumulate on the roof of a Food Service Establishment, and eventually start a fire or enter the storm drain when it rains. Contract with a management company if feasible.
- Clean floor mats in or over a fixture that is connected to a grease control device such as a mop sink, pot sink, or floor drain. Do not allow these grease-laden waters to enter the storm drain.

Recycling

Oil and grease is a valuable commodity. When using deep fat fryers or any process that requires or produces large amounts of plant or animal byproducts, collect the fats, oils, and greases. Recycle FOG through one of the area's many grease rendering companies. Recycling is the preferred method of grease management for Food Service Establishments that produce any volume of waste. To practice recycling:

- Never dispose of fryer-vat, waste oils, fats, or greases down the drain, as this material is usually clean enough to be recycled.
- Collect and empty grill scrapings and fryer-vat grease in a rendering tank. Most recycling companies will provide outside containers for storage until pick-up. Some companies offer this service free-of-charge, and may actually give a rebate on the materials collected.

Maintenance of Grease Control Devices (GCDs)

- Contract with grease haulers/recyclers to clean the grease control devices and grease rendering companies to collect excess grease for recycling.
- Inspect grease control devices regularly; weekly for grease traps and monthly for grease interceptors. The City follows the 25% Rule which is an industry standard for determining when a GCD needs servicing. When the amount of grease in the outlet compartment of a grease trap or grease interceptor meets, or exceeds, 25% of the total liquid level of the compartment the GCD requires cleaning.
- Schedule regular maintenance and cleaning of grease traps and grease interceptors and keep a log of inspections and performed maintenance.
- Have a copy of the recommended grease control device cleaning procedures on site.
- Witness all cleaning done by grease haulers to ensure proper methods are followed.

Following these simple guidelines, along with having a correctly sized and properly functioning grease control device will reduce the amount of FOG discharged to the Sanitary Sewer System.

If you are unsure about a practice call Derek Johnston, CMOM Compliance Inspector at the City of Florence **(843) 665-3236** or by e-mail djohnston@cityofflorence.com