

## *Fats, oil and grease FAQ*

### **What are some of the sources of Fats, Oils, and Grease?**

- Fatty foods, cooking oils, residual food debris, kitchen utensils, dinnerware, deep fryers, leftovers, and sauces are all sources of FOG that end up in the County Sanitary Sewer Collection System if they are not disposed of properly or discharged into a grease trap or interceptor.

### **What locations have to register with the Geauga County Department of Water Resources (GCDWR)?**

- All current and future Food Service Establishments (FSE), including restaurants, nursing homes, schools, hospitals, and other facilities from which grease can be expected to be discharged, are required to register and have a grease trap or interceptor which must be maintained and kept effective and efficient.

### **Is there a charge for the Fats, Oils, and Grease registration?**

- **No.** FSE registration is free, however, if a blockage or restriction occurs in the public sewer main, and it can be proven that the establishment is the cause of the blockage, then the establishment may have to pay for the public sewer to be maintained. FSE's with repeat violations to the GCDWR FOG Registration Program may be required to obtain a FOG Permit and there may be annual fees associated to the FOG Permit.

### **How often must grease traps/interceptors be maintained?**

- Because of the variety of grease trap sizes, the FSE must inspect the grease trap often (recommended weekly) to determine a cleaning schedule that maintains the device below 25% of its capacity. All FOG interceptors should be cleaned at least four times each year. Some establishments will find it necessary to clean their interceptors more often. The rule is to have your interceptor cleaned before it reaches 25% of its designed capacity

### **Are Food Service Establishment employees ever allowed to inspect and clean grease traps/interceptors?**

- Yes, establishments with small, less than 75 gallon, under-sink grease traps are permitted to do weekly self-inspections and cleanings. Weekly self-inspections of grease interceptors are encouraged but maintenance must be done by a grease hauler.

### **How long should maintenance logs be kept?**

- Logs for all cleaning, inspections, hauling, and maintenance, both self-inspections done by FSE owners/employees and those from the grease hauler, must be kept on file for three years. They should be available on site for review at all times.

### **What documentation should be kept for inspections and for how long?**

- Grease trap inspection logs, grease trap cleaning logs (including all receipts from septic haulers and records of self-cleaning, if applicable), grease disposal records, materials for employee training in Best Management Practices to reduce disposal of grease, and records of employee training, including dates, should all be kept for 3 years.

### **Is any training required for employees?**

- A FOG Best Management Practices (BMP) training program should be implemented for all new employees and an annual review for long term employees. You may develop your own BMP. There is a sample BMP on our website that may be used. A log of employee FOG training should be kept with their employee file.
- All FSE employees required to clean interior grease traps need to be trained in the factory recommended maintenance of your particular FOG trap. A training log should be available upon request during inspections, and kept with all maintenance logs on site for review for three years.
- Grease interceptors must be maintained by a grease hauler equipped to properly dispose of the waste. Manifests and receipts must be kept on site for review for three years.

### **What should be done if a Food Service Establishment will be closed for an extended period of time?**

- If an establishment will be closed for more than 30 days, it is exempt from the normal maintenance and inspection schedule. Traps and interceptors must be checked and cleaned before the closure date. Upon reopening, they must be cleaned again and inspected to prove functionality of the system. Proof of closure and approval from GCDWR Pretreatment must be obtained for the exemption.

### **How often will an inspector from the GCDWR inspect traps and interceptors at a Food Service Establishment?**

- Inspections will be done at least once a year; however, GCDWR may inspect any establishment as often as is deemed necessary to insure compliance with the FOG Program.

### **Will inspections be done again if a violation is found?**

- If a violation is found during the initial inspection or sampling, the inspector will perform follow-up inspections within a reasonable timeframe to insure compliance.

### **Can chemicals be used instead of a grease trap or interceptor?**

- Unless a written request is approved by the GCDWR Sanitary Engineer, **no** chemical or biological means can be used on Fats, Oils, and Grease. It is also a violation to bypass a trap or interceptor.

### **Who can be contacted for further information or additional questions?**

- You can visit the GCDWR website at [www.gcdwr.org](http://www.gcdwr.org) for resources including FOG registration, maintenance logs a Best Management Practices (BMP) brochure that can be used for employee training. You can also review the complete **General provision For Fats, Oils and Grease (FOG)** as it is found in **Chapter 7** of the **GCDWR Rules and Regulations**
- You can also call the GCDWR Industrial Pretreatment Coordinator, Ronnie Walker, at (440)279-1976 or by email at [ronw@gcdwr.org](mailto:ronw@gcdwr.org).