



FATS, OILS, AND GREASE (FOG) Frequently Asked Questions

What is FOG?

FOG is Fats, Oils, and Grease left over from food preparation that is often washed down the sink drain. It can be found in both residential and commercial kitchens.

What is the difference between Oil and Grease?

The terms oil and grease, though almost always used together, represent very different substances.

- **Oil** used for cooking remains a liquid, even when it cools.
- **Grease** is the residue left in the pan after frying meat, such as bacon. It may appear to be a liquid after cooking, but hardens as it cools.

What are common sources of FOG?

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|------------|----------|-----------------|--------------|---------------|
| Butter | Meats | Pastries | Cooking Oils | Ice Cream |
| Mayonnaise | Cookies | Salad Dressings | Marinades | Margarine |
| Cheese | Gravy | Sauces | Food Scraps | Peanut Butter |
| Yogurt | Frosting | Bacon Grease | Au Jus | Milk |

How does FOG get into the sewer system?

The fats, oils, and grease left over from food preparation end up on pots, pans, dishes, kitchen equipment, floors and floor mats – all of which must be washed. FOG is then rinsed down the drain and enters the plumbing system where it cools, separates from the wastewater, and sticks to the walls of pipes.

Why should I be concerned about FOG?

FOG builds up over time and leads to clogged sewer lines. This can result in sewer system capacity issues and cause:

- Sanitary Sewer Overflows (SSOs)
- Expensive cleanup and repair of damage to homes and businesses
- Health and environmental hazards from contact with raw sewage and discharge into local water sources
- Civil penalties and fines

**Did you know that FOG causes approximately 80% of all dry weather SSOs within the City of Fort Smith?*

How can I help prevent FOG?

Trash it. Put fats, oils, and grease in the trash – NEVER down the drain.

Do's:

- ✓ Seal It – Pour cooled oil into the trash or a covered container.
- ✓ Scrape It – Scrape leftover food and grease into the trash can before washing.
- ✓ Wipe It – Wipe the rest of the grease away with paper towels.

Don'ts:

- ✗ Rinse It – Rinsing dishes with hot water does not prevent grease from hardening in the pipes.
- ✗ Grind It – Garbage disposals won't remove FOG. Chopped up, greasy food still causes clogs.
- ✗ Chase It – Chasing grease with soap or detergents does not dissolve the problem.



FATS, OILS, AND GREASE (FOG)

Frequently Asked Questions for Food Service & Food Prep Establishments

Does the City have any special compliance requirements for food service and food prep establishments?

FOG is of particular concern in these establishments due to the large volume of fats, oils, and grease used to prepare food on a daily basis. The City of Fort Smith Ordinance 89-16 prohibits discharge of pollutants, including FOG, that will cause flow obstructions in the city sewer system and allows for assessment of penalties and charges related to prohibited discharges.

What do I need to do to be compliant?

- A Fort Smith Waste Survey Form must be completed and submitted.
- A FOG Generator Permit Application must be completed and submitted. (There are currently no fees associated with a FOG permit.)
- Any required documents that are requested by the City must be submitted within 30 days.
- Installation and/or repair of required equipment (FOG interceptor(s)/grease control device(s)).

Does the City provide training to my establishment?

When you receive a FOG permit, the City's FOG Program will provide training on Best Management Practices (BMPs).

What can I do to prevent FOG in my establishment?

To reduce the amount of FOG entering the collection system, remember to **SCRAPE**:

- ✓ **S**crape or wipe grease and food scraps from all cookware into a sealable container or trash bin.
- ✓ **C**ollect liquid cooking oils in an oil rendering tank or oil recycling container.
- ✓ **R**otate cleaning schedule among fryers and food preparation devices.
- ✓ **A**ssign clean-up tasks to specific employees.
- ✓ **P**repare foods with minimal amounts of fats, oils, and grease.
- ✓ **E**ducate employees on the importance of reducing FOG and following proper Best Management Practices.

Can enzymes or additives be used to lower the FOG discharge?

The use of enzymes and additives are prohibited.

What is a FOG interceptor and how does it work?

- A FOG interceptor is a multi-compartment device that is constructed in different sizes and is generally required to be located underground between a FOG generator and the connection to the sewer system.
- These devices primarily use gravity to separate FOG from the wastewater as it moves from one compartment to the next.
- To be effective these devices must be cleaned, maintained, and have the FOG removed and disposed of in a proper manner on regular intervals.
- FOG interceptors are also known as grease interceptors, oil interceptors, or oil/water separators.