

## ENFORCING REGULATIONS

DEP enforces the City's sewer use regulations and may fine businesses that are not in compliance. DEP routinely sends inspectors to businesses to check grease interceptors and make sure they are correctly sized, properly installed and maintained, and operating effectively. If a business has an interceptor that is too small, inspectors will order the owner or operator to install the correctly sized unit, based on New York City's Sewer Use Regulations (15 RCNY Section 19-11) and Plumbing Code. The maximum penalty for not complying with the rules is currently \$10,000 per day, per violation. To avoid the expense of such fines, install the correctly sized unit and maintain it properly.

Grease interceptors should conform to American Society of Mechanical Engineers (ASME-A112.14.3 or A112.14.4) or Plumbing & Drainage Institute (PDI-G101) standards (unless prior approval for the grease interceptor was received from the NYC Board of Standards & Appeals or the NYC Department of Buildings Materials and Equipment Acceptance Division), and should be installed in accordance with the manufacturer's instructions.

For information about the City's Sewer Use Regulations write to the address on the back of this brochure, or contact us online at: [www.nyc.gov/dep](http://www.nyc.gov/dep).

*To report sewer back-ups or to get assistance with sewer, water, air or noise problems, call 311.*

**311** Dial 311 for all non-emergency City services and hotlines

or contact us online at:

[www.nyc.gov/dep](http://www.nyc.gov/dep)



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# PREVENTING GREASE DISCHARGES INTO SEWERS

*Guidelines for  
New York City Businesses*



A thriving business community is vital to New York City and its neighborhoods. A healthy economy benefits every New Yorker. But when businesses fail to comply with sewer use regulations and improperly dispose of fat, oil, and grease (FOG), sewer lines can become clogged, causing sewage to back up into basements of homes and commercial establishments. When that happens, the entire community suffers.

The New York City Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) is responsible for maintaining the City's sewage system -- over 6,000 miles of sewers and 14 wastewater treatment plants that process about 1.3 billion gallons of sewage per day. Sewer back-ups are a major sewer system problem that damages property and affects public health. In some areas, back-ups are frequently caused by FOG clogging the local sewers. To address this problem, DEP is helping businesses comply with the City's sewer use regulations. DEP is educating not only restaurant owners, but also other food service establishments, as well as the general public to keep FOG and other materials and chemicals out of the sewer system.

To work effectively, sewer systems need to be properly maintained, from the drain to the treatment plant. If wastes are disposed of correctly, the City's sewer system can handle them without any problem. FOG is an example of a waste that the sewer system cannot handle, and, therefore, should not be put down the drain. The City needs businesses and individuals to do their part to maintain the system because repeated repairs are disruptive to residences and businesses alike. Furthermore, proper disposal by commercial establishments is required by law.

## SEWER REGULATIONS CONCERNING GREASE

To ensure the proper disposal of FOG, and to prevent sewage back-ups, the City requires grease-generating establishments to properly install, op-

erate and maintain correctly sized and designed grease interceptors. These grease interceptors must be routinely cleaned to ensure optimal operation. In addition, waste cooking oil also must be disposed of properly and should be recycled. (For more information see NYCDEP Sewer Use Regulations, 15 RCNY Chapter 19.)

In 1998 the City amended the Sewer Use Regulations. These amendments clarify existing requirements and provide for self-certification of grease interceptors by a NYS Licensed Professional Engineer or Registered Architect. Self-certification relieves regulated establishments from a lengthy departmental review process.

## HOW GREASE INTERCEPTORS WORK

Every business that generates FOG (e.g., restaurants, food handling operations, hospitals, day care and senior centers), is required to have grease interceptors to prevent these materials from entering and clogging sewer lines.

This equipment works by separating the FOG from the wastewater. Greasy wastewater entering the interceptor passes through a vented flow-control fitting that regulates the flow of the wastewater. The wastewater then passes under one or more separator baffles, or regulating devices within the interceptor, that separate the FOG from the wastewater. The FOG then floats to

the top of the interceptor, where it accumulates until manually removed. The grease-free water continues to flow through the interceptor into a wastewater discharge pipe, and then to the City's sewer system.

## INSTALLING AND MAINTAINING YOUR GREASE INTERCEPTOR

If a grease interceptor is not properly installed or maintained it will not do its job. For your own assurance, DEP requires that only licensed plumbers install grease interceptors. These interceptors must be the correct size to work properly. A licensed plumber can determine the correct size, based on the sizing criteria in 15 RCNY Section 19-11. For technical assistance plumbers and business owners may write to DEP's Bureau of Wastewater Treatment, Compliance Engineering Section, at the address listed on the back of this brochure.

Every grease interceptor should be cleaned as frequently as necessary to avoid exceeding its rated capacity. To clean, remove the cover of the interceptor and scoop out any grease and/or oil that has collected on top. Also remove all solid food material that has settled at the bottom of the interceptor. FOG from the grease interceptor, as well as waste cooking oil, can be recycled, and should be collected by a fat renderer or other grease recycling company that is licensed by the City of New York Business Integrity Commission (BIC) to pick up trade waste. BIC-licensed carters that pick up FOG may be located in several ways. A partial list can be found under Kitchen and Composting: "fat, grease, and bone haulers" on the following page of the NYCWasteless website: [www.nyc.gov/wasteless/vendors](http://www.nyc.gov/wasteless/vendors). (Our reference to this website does not constitute an endorsement of the services of any of the vendors listed therein.) If you find any outdated information, or would like to suggest additional listings, please forward by using the website: [www.nyc.gov/wasteless/contact](http://www.nyc.gov/wasteless/contact).

