

A thriving business community is vital to New York City and its neighborhoods. A healthy economy benefits every New Yorker. But when businesses disregard sewer use regulations and improperly dispose of fats, 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 - 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 operators of nursing homes, fruit and vegetable stands, laundries, and dry cleaners, among others, 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.

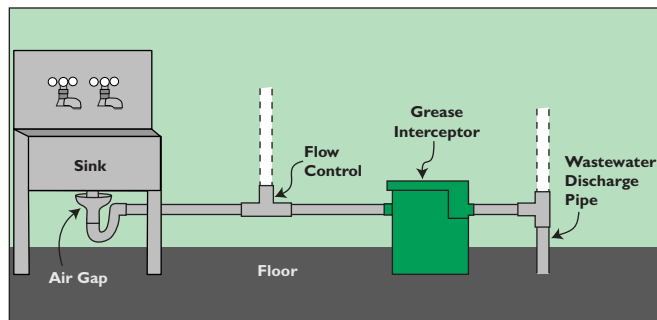
SEWER REGULATIONS CONCERNING GREASE

To ensure the proper disposal of FOG, and to prevent sewage back-ups, the City requires grease-generating establishments to correctly install, operate and maintain properly sized and designed grease interceptors. These grease interceptors must be routinely cleaned to ensure proper operation. (For more information see NYCDEP Sewer Use Regulations, 15 RCNY Chapter 19.)

On November 9, 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 disposes of FOG (e.g. restaurants, food handling operations, hospitals, day care and senior centers), should have a grease interceptor to prevent these materials from entering and clogging sewer lines.



This equipment works by separating the grease and oils from wastewater. Greasy wastewater entering the interceptor passes through a vented flow control fitting that regulates the flow of the wastewater. The wastewater then passes over a series of separator baffles, or regulating devices within the interceptor, that separates FOG. The FOG then floats to the top of the interceptor and accumulates until manually removed. The wastewater continues to flow through the interceptor, into a 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 proper size to work correctly. A licensed plumber can determine the correct size. Plumbers and business owners may also write to DEP's Bureau of Wastewater Treatment, Pollution Prevention Section, at the address listed on the back of this brochure for technical assistance.

Every 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. Grease and oil can be recycled, and should be collected by a fat renderer or other grease recycling company. Check the phone book under "Grease Traps" for such companies.

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 interceptors and make sure they are correctly sized, properly installed, maintained, and operating effectively. If a business has an interceptor that is too small, inspectors will order the owner or operator to install the proper unit, based on New York City's Building Code and Sewer Use Regulations. 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.

For information about the City's Sewer Use Regulations write to the address on the back of this brochure, or contact us on-line at www.nyc.gov/dep.

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

DIAL 311 Government Information and Services for NYC

or contact us on-line at:

www.nyc.gov/dep



www.nyc.gov/dep

New York City
Department of Environmental Protection
Bureau of Wastewater Treatment
59-17 Junction Boulevard
Flushing, New York 11373-5108

*What You
Should Know About*

PREVENTING GREASE DISCHARGES INTO SEWERS

**Guidelines for
New York City Businesses**



www.nyc.gov/dep

Michael R. Bloomberg, Mayor
David B. Tweedy, Acting Commissioner