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**F.O.G. (Fats, Oils, Grease)**  
**FAQ**

In the sewer business, FOG refers to Fats, Oils, and Grease - usually a byproduct of cooking, but not always - that enters a sewer system through sinks, floor drains, dishwashers, toilets, or other plumbing connected to a sanitary sewer and may refer, but not be limited to, the following:

- Butter, lard, shortening
- Cooking oil
- Rendered fat from cooked meats
- Food scraps
- Salad Dressings, Mayo, Sauces
- Sour Cream, Yogurt, other Dairy products
- Old cosmetics, suntan lotions, or other greasy personal products

**Why is FOG a problem?**

While it may seem harmless while entering the drain, FOG and solid food waste can cause blockages in your plumbing or the sewer lines of the District by building up along the walls of the pipes over time. This can lead to overflows in your home, adjacent buildings, and the street. FOG can also adversely affect the operability of the sewer lift stations serving the District by accumulating on level sensing equipment or inside pumps, leading to spills, or worst case scenario, damaged equipment. Sewer spills are a safety hazard that can endanger public health and impact the Berryessa Estates community and the Lake Berryessa watershed. Should a FOG related discharge occur on the public side of the collection system, violations or fines from the Regional Water Quality Control Board may be possible. Additionally, damaged equipment from excessive FOG requires immediate repair, impacting carefully planned budgets and potentially user rates in the end.



**Doing your part**

The easiest way to solve the FOG problem and help prevent overflows of raw sewage is to keep FOG out of the sewer system by adopting different habits to minimize FOG sources in your home.

The following are tips to do your part to reduce FOG in your sewer system:

- If oils or grease remain in the pan after cooking: Let it cool to a safe temperature and then pour or transfer it to a sealed, disposable container and place it in the trash. Never pour hot grease or oil into the trash or sink.
- Remove as much oil and grease from pots, pans and plates prior to washing them in the sink or putting in the dishwasher.
- If you wash dishes by hand, cold water will congeal FOG, making it less likely to build up in your home's plumbing and sewer lateral.
- Dispose of old cosmetics, suntan lotions and other oily or greasy personal products in the trash.
- Never put fats or grease down the sink drains or into the toilet.
- Ignoring these easy steps could result in a grease blockage in your plumbing system, which can be expensive to remedy. Backed up or overflowing sinks and toilets are a possible result- which is messy, unsanitary, and could damage your home

[Click for additional information about reuse of cooking oil, or recycling of oil and grease.](#)

### **FOG Myths Debunked**

- *Running Hot Tap Water*  
Running hot tap water down the drain will not help grease float through the sewer pipe because the water will eventually cool as it flows through the pipe and the grease will become solid again.
- *Room Temperature Oils*  
If oils that remain liquid at room temperature (such as extra virgin olive oil or toasted nut oils) are disposed down the drain, they will contribute to FOG buildup in sewer pipes, where temperatures can dip low enough to cause solidification of these oils.
- *Soaps and Detergents*  
The use of soaps and detergents to dissolve grease will not protect against grease buildup. Soaps may initially break up grease, but as it travels further downstream it will eventually lose this ability and grease will begin to accumulate in your home's plumbing and sewer laterals.
- *Garbage disposals*  
Running the garbage disposal will do nothing to protect your drain lines from accumulating grease. Garbage disposals only shred leftover fats into smaller pieces; they do not get rid of the fats that create grease.

The best solution is always prevention, so keep FOG out of your pipes and the sewer system to avoid the inconvenience of having to call a drain cleaning service.