

# FOG: Fats, Oils & Grease

## From the Pan to the Can

### WHAT IS FOG?

FOG refers to fats, oils and grease from food preparation and kitchen clean up. Significant sources of FOG include:

- Meat fats
- Cooking oil
- Food scraps
- Sauces, salad dressings and mayonnaise
- Lard, shortening and butter
- Dairy products

### WHY DOES FOG CAUSE PROBLEMS?

When FOG is discharged into the sanitary sewer, it solidifies and sticks to the walls of the pipe. Eventually FOG buildup can block the line, causing sewer back-ups resulting in:

- Clogged drains and/or toilets
- Sewage back-ups into your home
- Discharge of raw sewage to the environment
- Expensive cleanup and replacement of damaged property
- Higher sewer charges
- Odors
- Potential public health risks

### BEST MANAGEMENT PRACTICES

#### DO!

- Pour cooled cooking oil into garbage or covered container
- Scrape food scraps into the garbage or compost bin and wipe dishes free of fats, oils and grease
- Clean grease spills with absorbent material and then dispose of it in the garbage

#### DON'T!

- Discharge FOG down drains, sinks, or storm grates
- Scrape food scraps into the sink
- Run water over greasy dishes

### GREASE MYTHS

*It is alright to let FOG go down the drain if...*

**...I run hot water.** No. The grease may eventually cool and solidify in the sewer pipe.

**...I use the garbage disposal.** No. The garbage disposal only grinds up larger items before discharging them to the sewer system. The garbage disposal does not eliminate the FOG from these items. Compost food scraps or dispose of them in the household garbage as appropriate.

**...I chase it down with dish soap.** No. Most dish soaps break up grease, but the soap will eventually lose its effectiveness, causing the grease to solidify in the sewer system.

**For more information, call 311 or email [publicworks@baltimorecity.gov](mailto:publicworks@baltimorecity.gov).**

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