



KEEP **GREASE** OUT OF THE SYSTEM

# Grease Interceptor Maintenance

## What is the Purpose of a Grease Interceptor?

- A grease interceptor is designed to separate Fats, Oils, and Grease (FOG) and solid food waste from your kitchen wastewater.
- Buildup of FOG and solid food waste in your plumbing may cause blockages in either your plumbing or the sanitary sewer lines. This can lead to a sanitary sewer overflow into your building, a neighbor's building, streets, or the environment. It is important to clean your grease interceptor regularly.

## Cleaning Frequency

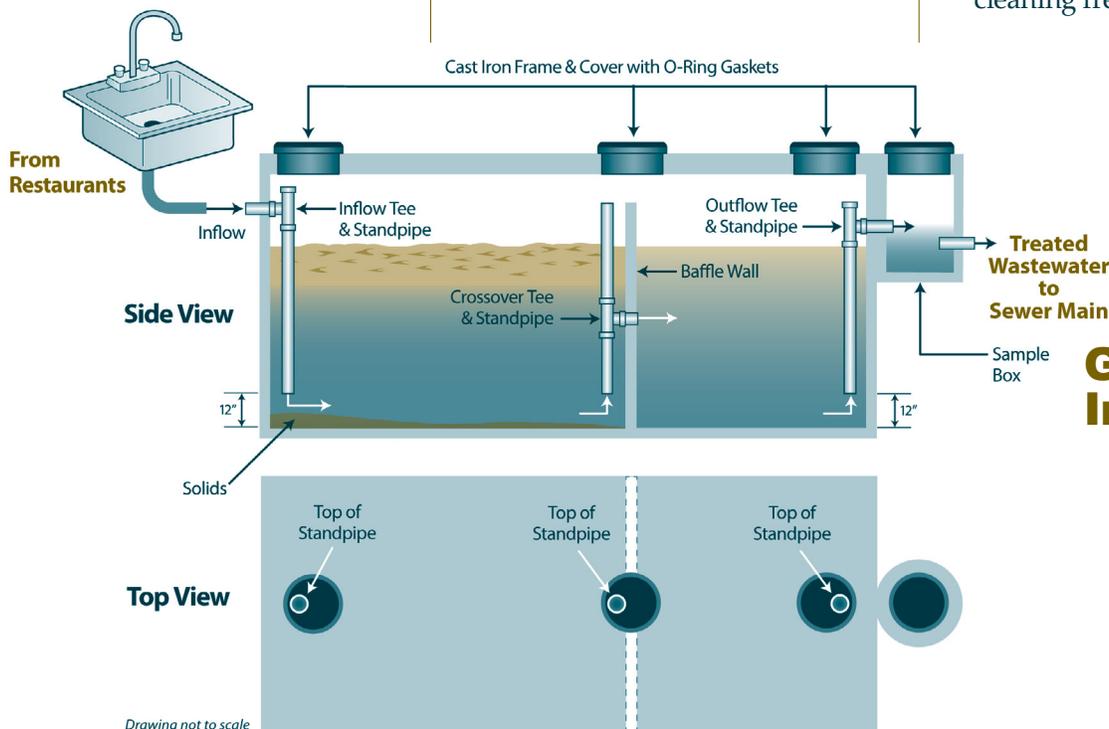
- Grease interceptors shall be cleaned **at least once every 90 days**. More frequent cleaning may be necessary to keep your interceptor operating properly.

## Twenty-Five Percent Rule

- **Pump your interceptor when it is twenty-five percent (25%) full of FOG and solid food waste or within 90 days of the last pumping, whichever comes first.**

## Standards for Evaluating Grease Interceptors

- Manhole and sample box lids should be easily removable for cleaning and inspections.
- The baffle wall and all three standpipes must be in place and unbroken, above and below the water and grease levels.
- If any standpipes are under water or grease, they must be raised above the grease level. High water or grease level could result from a blockage in the downstream pipes.
- Downstream blockages could indicate inadequate interceptor cleaning frequency.



**Grease in the system causes problems in storm drains and sanitary sewers — and increases your operating costs.**

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**Failure to maintain records on site for a minimum of three years is a violation of your local sewer ordinance and may result in fines. See the “Grease Control Device Maintenance Recordkeeping” factsheet for more information.**



*Discharging used cooking or deep fryer oil, rotisserie fat, or solid food waste into kitchen sinks, mop sinks, and floor drains in your kitchen that are connected to the **sanitary sewer system** is a violation of your local sewer use ordinances.*



*Discharging anything, including oil, grease waste, wash water, or rinse water to the **storm drain system** is a violation of the local sewer use ordinance.*

**For more information:**

City of San José Environmental Services  
Watershed Protection Division  
200 E. Santa Clara Street, Floor 7  
San José, CA 95113  
(408) 945-3000  
Fax: (408) 271-1930  
[www.sanjoseca.gov/esd](http://www.sanjoseca.gov/esd)

**Kitchen Best Management Practices (BMPs)**

- Grease and solid food waste can build up inside the interceptor and may cause the interceptor to operate less efficiently.
- Scraping grease and food waste to the garbage before washing dishes will minimize the amount of grease and solids going into the grease interceptor and will improve interceptor performance.

**Tips on Routine Grease Interceptor Maintenance**

- The pumping service should wash and scrape all sides, standpipes, and surfaces inside the interceptor and completely pump out all contents.
- The pumping service shall not decant (return) wastewater back into the interceptor; the grease concentration in interceptor wastewater is very high.
- Make sure your pumping service cleans the sample box and effluent standpipe of the interceptor. You may need to pump more often if you see fresh grease being discharged into your sample box.
- Require the pumping service to show the disposal destination for your waste on the pumping invoice. Your business may be liable for any illegal dumping or discharge of waste from your facility.
- Do visual inspections after pumping services are performed or when plumbers snake or hydro-jet plumbing or laterals to make sure the interceptor standpipes are not damaged.
- Keep grease interceptor pumping records on site for a minimum of three years. Refer to the Grease Control Device Maintenance Recordkeeping sheet for more information.

If you have any questions, please call (408) 945-3000 to speak with an Environmental Inspector.

This and other outreach materials are available at [www.sanjoseca.gov/esd/water-pollution-prevention/fog-bmps.asp](http://www.sanjoseca.gov/esd/water-pollution-prevention/fog-bmps.asp)

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WATER POLLUTION  
CONTROL PLANT

Serving the cities of San José, Santa Clara, and Milpitas, Cupertino Sanitary District, West Valley Sanitation District (including the cities of Campbell, Los Gatos, Monte Sereno, and Saratoga), County Sanitation District No. 2-3, and Burbank Sanitary District.



In accordance with the Americans with Disabilities Act, City of San José Environmental Services Department materials can be made available upon request in alternative formats, such as Braille, large print, audiotope or computer disk. Requests may be made by calling (408) 945-3000 (voice) or (800) 735-2929 (California Relay Service).