

## Why is proper FOG disposal important?

- ◆ Keeping FOGs out of your plumbing drains helps to **prevent sewage backups in your home and/or workplace.**
- ◆ Proper grease disposal helps to **reduce your costs for plumbing maintenance and cleaning.**
- ◆ Keeping FOGs out of the public sewer system **will help prevent overflows of untreated wastewater** into the natural environment.
- ◆ Preventing wastewater overflows helps to **protect the public health** as well as the natural environment.



ABOVE: To operate with the simple force of gravity, sewers are installed with a downhill slope, often follow or are near ravines and creeks, and may be in wooded areas. Preventing sewage overflows is one of our highest priorities.

## Highlights

- ✓ In North Carolina, fat, oil and grease typically cause or help cause 25% or more of the wastewater overflows from sewers.
- ✓ Inside a sewer or plumbing drain, fat, oil and grease harden to a plaster-like consistency. Grease accumulations cause sewage overflows by blocking the flow inside a sewer.
- ✓ When a blockage occurs, sewage can spill out of a manhole into the natural environment.
- ✓ Fat, oil and grease may also cause back-ups in plumbing drains at residences and businesses.
- ✓ Residents can dispose of small amounts of fat, oil and grease (up to one quart at a time) in a sealed container as part of normal household refuse taken to the landfill.
- ✓ Businesses and other non-residential customers that produce waste fat, oil and grease must have a grease trap that meets OWASA standards for effective operation.
- ✓ Grease traps must be cleaned out regularly by a company that recycles fat, oil and grease.

# Please don't



# up

# the sewers!

**FOG** means Fat, Oil and Grease

**The proper disposal of fat, oil and grease helps prevent sewage overflows in our community.**

Orange Water and Sewer Authority



400 Jones Ferry Road, Carrboro, NC 27510  
telephone: (919) 968-4421; fax: 968-4464  
e-mail: [webmaster@owasa.org](mailto:webmaster@owasa.org)  
Website: [www.owasa.org](http://www.owasa.org)

**A public, non-profit agency providing water, sewer and reclaimed water services to the Carrboro-Chapel Hill community**

# HOW **FOG** CAN CAUSE SEWAGE OVERFLOWS

Waste fat, oil and grease (FOGs) are often produced in preparing food and in washing or other cleaning of cooking utensils.

Inside a plumbing system or a public sewer, FOGs harden to a plaster-like consistency and they often accumulate where tree roots have grown into a sewer main.

When FOGs accumulate in a sewer, they block the flow of sewage or “wastewater.”

A combination of roots and grease is especially likely to block the wastewater flow in a

sewer.

When there is a blockage, wastewater can only go one of two places.

It can spill out of a manhole into the natural environment, or it can back up into a house or other building.

We clean and clear about one third of our 322 miles of sewers annually, but it is not possible to remove all FOG accumulations before they cause overflows.



*Above: Fat, oil and grease are beginning to accumulate in a sewer and restrict the flow of wastewater. This picture was taken with a special videocamera we use to inspect the sewer system.*

## A spatula and paper towels...



...low cost, highly effective tools for proper **FOG** disposal.

## KEEPING **FOG** OUT OF DRAINS AND SEWERS

- ◆ Prevent fat, oil and grease from going down the drain during food preparation and while washing dishes.

Scraping or wiping fat, oil and grease off pots, pans, plates, bowls, etc. is simple but very effective.

- ◆ **RESIDENTS** should dispose of small amounts (1 quart or less) of fat, oil and grease in a sealed container with household solid waste. In general, liquids should not be disposed of in a landfill. The Orange County Solid Waste Department therefore asks residents to make an effort to “solidify” fat, oil and grease

by using a paper towel(s), newsprint, etc. to absorb FOGs.

- ◆ Households with larger amounts of fat, oil, and grease should bring these items to the Household Hazardous Waste Collection program at the Orange County Landfill. Please call 968-2788, send an e-mail to [recycling@co.orange.nc.us](mailto:recycling@co.orange.nc.us) or visit <http://www.co.orange.nc.us/recycling/hhw.asp> for more information.
- ◆ **BUSINESSES** must have a grease trap which meets OWASA standards for effectiveness and is regularly cleaned out by a company that recycles the FOGs.