



# Fats, Oils, and Grease (FOG)

## Issues: Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

The following are frequently asked questions intended to provide general information to Food Service Establishment in the City of Tustin and unincorporated areas in Orange County Sanitation District's (OCSD) Area-7 regarding issues related to Fats, Oils, and Grease discharge.

### What is FOG?

- FOG refers to animal and vegetable fats, oils, and greases that are commonly used and generated from Food Service Establishments involved in food preparation. FOG is found in butter and margarine, baking goods, cooking oil, dairy products, food scraps, lard, meat fats, etc.

### Why is FOG a Problem?

- When poured down the drain, FOG can build up over time in pipes, pumps, and equipment, causing significant problems to the OCSD's sewer collection system and wastewater treatment plant. Problems include sewer line blockages that can lead to sewer overflows (spills) that causes environmental and health hazards.
- Sewer overflows releases contain disease-causing bacteria, viruses, and other human health pathogens that can easily be transported to high recreational waterways, such as Orange County's beaches jeopardizing public health.

- During the period of July 2000 through July 2003, the City of Tustin and some unincorporated areas within OCSD's jurisdiction had 62 FOG-related blockages/sewage spills.

### What is being done to Prevent FOG related Sewer Overflows?

- The California Regional Water Quality Control Board (Santa Ana Region) issued an order in April 2002 that mandates cities and sanitary agencies to prevent sewer overflows related to grease blockages.
- To comply with this order, OCSD has adopted a FOG Ordinance intended to target Food Service Establishments such as restaurants in the City of Tustin and unincorporated within the OCSD's Area 7.

### Why Should I Care About FOG?

- Food Service Establishments have been identified as significant contributors of FOG in the sewer lines because of the amount of grease produced during cooking, food preparation, and kitchen clean. If Food Service Establishments are found in noncompliance with OCSD's FOG Ordinance, OCSD may subject Food Service Establishments to civil penalties including fines or may escalate to criminal penalties including guilty of a misdemeanor or imprisonment.
- Beginning January 1, 2005, OCSD's FOG Ordinance becomes effective requiring Food

Service Establishments to comply with the provisions and conditions set forth in the FOG Ordinance. These provisions include, but not limited to, Food Service Establishments complying with a FOG Wastewater Discharge Permit (permit), implementing Best Management Practices, and installing grease interceptors intended to reduce FOG discharge into OCSD's sewer system. See fact sheet "Core Elements: Fats, Oils, and Grease Ordinance No. OCSD-25."

## What are ways to reduce the amount of grease that goes down the drain?

- Food Service Establishments are responsible to implement Best Management Practices to reduce FOG discharge into OCSD's system. A list of Best Management Practices is included with the FOG Permit Packet.

## Whom do I contact regarding FOG related issues?

### **FOG Source Control Management:**

Mahin Talebi, OCSD Source Control Manager  
(714) 593-7410

### **FOG Source Control Program Permit and Enforcement:**

Jerry Evangelista, OCSD Source Control Supervisor  
(714) 593-7419

Tom Gaworski, OCSD Principle Environmental Specialist  
(714) 593-7422

### **FOG Regional Issues:**

Mark Kawamoto, OCSD Engineer  
(714) 593-7424