



THE CITY OF SAN DIEGO

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Never Pour Cooking Grease Down the Drain

SAN DIEGO – With the holidays approaching, many will be cooking more at home and preparing meals for large groups of family and friends. During this time, it's necessary to remember that cooking grease is one of the primary causes of residential pipeline and sewer main clogs resulting in sewer spills. The spilled sewage eventually reaches San Diego's bays, rivers, and beaches, causing unsafe conditions and temporary closures.

All cooking oils disposed of improperly can cause problems in the sewer system. This list includes but is not limited to: **Frying oil, salad oil, pan drippings, bacon fat, and greasy leftovers.**

Cooking grease coats pipelines similar to the way that cholesterol clogs human arteries. The grease clings to the inside of the pipelines, eventually causing complete blockage. Costly home plumbing bills are often the result of grease-clogged pipelines. Residential pipelines two to four inches in diameter are the easiest and usually the first to clog.

Many people are unaware that pouring hot water and detergent down the drain only breaks up grease temporarily. Grease should *never* be poured down the drain. If small amounts of grease accidentally get into your drain, flush immediately with *cold* water. Flushing grease down the toilet also causes sewer backups.

By following a few simple steps, you can help prevent costly sewer spills in the future.

- Step 1: All cooking oil should be poured into an old milk carton, frozen juice container or other non recyclable package, and disposed of in the garbage, not down the drain.
- Step 2: Dishes and pots that are coated with greasy leftovers should be wiped clean with a disposable towel prior to washing or placement in dishwashers.
- Step 3: Instead of placing fat trimmings from meat in the garbage disposal, put them in a trash can.

Always put cooking grease containers and greasy towels in a secure bag before disposing of them in your trash bag. Never dispose of cooking grease directly into your automated trash container.

Report Spills! If you see or smell something you think might be a sewer spill, report it immediately by calling the City of San Diego Public Utilities Department's Grease Disposal Program. Visit us on the web at www.sandiego.gov/mwwd/sewerspill/grease/index.shtml.

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