



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
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# **Sewer Backups Can Damage Your Home and the Environment, and Ruin Holiday Festivities**

**CITY OF SAN DIEGO REMINDS THE PUBLIC NOT TO POUR FATS, OILS AND GREASE DOWN THE DRAIN**

SAN DIEGO – During the holiday season, you may be cooking more at home, but you don't want your festivities ruined by sewer problems. The City of San Diego reminds residents that it's important not to pour fats, oils and grease down the drain, which could lead to clogged pipes and sewer spills. Blockages of sewer pipelines can cause health hazards, damage home interiors and harm the environment.

**“Properly disposing fats, oils and grease is very important so that you don't cause plumbing problems,” said Shauna Lorange, Director of the City's Public Utilities Department. “Preventing sewer spills can save you money and headaches.”**

Grease is a byproduct of cooking that comes from meat fats, lard, oil, shortening, butter, margarine, food scraps, baked goods, sauces and dairy products. When washed down a sink drain, grease sticks to the inside of sewer pipes. Over time, it can build up and block an entire pipe.

Hot water and store-bought products that claim to dissolve grease only pass it farther down the line, where it causes problems elsewhere.

Since the beginning of the year, crews from the Public Utilities Department have had to respond to more than 30 sewer spills throughout the city. Eight of these spills were the result of fats, oils and grease that had clogged a pipeline and could have been prevented.

By following these simple steps, you can help prevent costly sewer spills in the future:

- Never pour grease down the sink drain or garbage disposal. Home garbage disposals do not keep grease out of the plumbing system.
- Put strainers in sink drains to catch food scraps and other solids and then empty in the trash or composting bin.
- Wipe dishes and pots that are coated with greasy leftovers with a disposable towel prior to washing or placing in the dishwasher, and put the towel in the trash.

- Place fat trimmings from meat into the trash, not the garbage disposal.
- Keep roots out of sewer pipelines by planting trees and bushes away from your home's lateral connection to the City sewer main.

City of San Diego residents can now recycle their cooking oil and grease at the Miramar Recycling Center, located at 5165 Convoy St. A cooking oil recycling bin is available to City residents for disposal of up to 30 gallons of cooking oil and cooking grease. There is no charge for the service. The recycling service is not open to commercial food preparation businesses.

To report a sewer spill, call the emergency hotline at 619-515-3525. Visit the City's website for more information about [preventing sewer spills](#).

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