

## 3 Easy Steps to Steer Clear of the F.O.G.



### #1: Choose your Weapon

Keep either a metal can, glass jar, or porcelain container by the kitchen sink at all times. Disposable grease bags are also sold in many grocery stores and can be used to line the container.

### #2: Scrape your Plate

Just prepared a meal involving F.O.G.? Immediately scrape or pour all leftover fats and grease (it's much easier when it's still hot) from your pots and pans into the nearby container.



Also use a basket strainer to catch and dispose of any leftover food. **Avoid using garbage disposals** to discard food waste. They are major F.O.G. and clog generators.



### #3: Get it in the Garbage

When your container or disposable grease bag is full, simply toss it in the trash. To avoid hot oil spilling, simply wait until the F.O.G. has cooled and solidified before tossing it.

## F.O.G. & Sewer Overflows

Live in the City of Syracuse? Chances are your drinking water comes from **Skaneateles Lake**. But your wastewater (what you wash down the kitchen sink or flush down the toilet) is carried into **Onondaga Lake** after being treated at the Metropolitan Syracuse Wastewater Treatment Plant.

However, Syracuse has a **combined sewer system**, which means that the storm drains that line the city streets pour into the same system that carries the wastewater out of your home.

This poses a major problem during heavy rain events when the amount of water surging into the sewers can exceed the capacity of the system, **causing untreated sewage to overflow into streets and basements, and into creeks that lead to Onondaga Lake.**

F.O.G directly contributes to these overflows by clogging the sewers like cholesterol in arteries, in turn greatly reducing the volume of water they can handle at once.

**Reduce the F.O.G, reduce the overflows!**

### Need More Information?

For questions about Fats, Oils, and Grease (F.O.G.), Best Management Practices, or local ordinances, contact the Onondaga County Department of Water Environment Protection Pollution Prevention Program at (315) 435-2260.

# AVOID THE CLOG KEEP OUT THE GREASE



## What is F.O.G.?

F.O.G. refers to Fat, Oil, and Grease and is found almost anywhere food is prepared, like dining halls, kitchens, and restaurants. About **30 percent** of foods we eat contain F.O.G. These include meats, sauces, gravies, salad dressings, deep-fried dishes, cookies, pastries, cheese, butter, and others.

Technically speaking, **F.O.G. is any solid or viscous substance**, including grease which will or may cause obstruction to the flow in a sewer, or otherwise interfere with the normal operation of the wastewater treatment system.

## Why is F.O.G. a Problem?

F.O.G. is the main cause of sewer line blockages. These blockages are unsightly, unhealthy, and clean-up is difficult, time-consuming and costly. When sewer lines become blocked, raw sewage may back up onto streets, parking lots, and into nearby businesses and residences. These overflows are **messy, costly**, and a potential **threat to your health and the environment**.

## Why Should You Care?

- **Save Syracuse Money:** The Onondaga County and City of Syracuse Sewer Departments respond to an average of **two (2)**

**sewer main backups a week**, each of which cost +\$1000 to fix. **Fifty percent** of such backups are grease and oil related.

- **Save Yourself Money:** Clogs can be expensive. Live in an off-campus apartment? It routinely costs **\$300-400** to jet clogged sewer lines thanks to F.O.G., which doesn't make landlords happy.
- **Protect the Environment:** Sewage line blockages due to F.O.G. are more than just a nuisance; they pose a threat to both your health and the environment. By constricting the capacity of the city's sanitary wastewater system, F.O.G. **increases the potential for sewer overflows** during heavy rain events, which spill raw sewage into nearby creeks, in turn carrying bacteria, floating trash, and other contaminants into Onondaga Lake.
- **F.O.G. Comes Mostly from You:** Household residences contribute the largest percentage of F.O.G. to the sewer system. Though commercial eateries and institutional dining centers are already required by city ordinance to use grease interceptors, people like you stand to make the biggest difference by changing your own behavior.

## What You Can Do

- After cooking or eating a F.O.G.-heavy meal (such as eggs or burgers) make sure to wipe the pan out with paper towels to put in the trash. **DO**

**NOT** wash it down the drain.

- Avoid using trash disposals, as they are huge contributors to F.O.G.
- **DO NOT** try to wash F.O.G. down the drain with hot water. Since all grease will eventually cool down and solidify, this doesn't decrease the chance of clogs. It merely moves them further down the pipe.
- Tell others about F.O.G. and the importance of keeping our sewers running safe and smooth.

## F.O.G. Recycling?

Have some used fats, oils, or grease leftover from cooking or deep frying that you would like to recycle? **The Metropolitan Syracuse Wastewater Treatment Plant will take it off your hands for free\*!**

Metro personnel are on hand to help 9 am to 5 pm, seven days a week, 365 days a year. Grease or oil must be in liquid form in a sealed container. (Petroleum-based oils such as motor oil is not accepted).

Though the service is free, residents must stop in the Waste Hauler Control Office to sign a form before their F.O.G. can be disposed.

The Wastewater Treatment Plant is located at 650 Hiawatha Boulevard West in Syracuse (just south of Carousel Mall).

\*Does not apply to businesses.