

# No Grease Down the Drain

**G**rease is a byproduct of cooking. It comes from meat, lard, oil, shortening, butter, margarine, food scraps, baking goods, sauces and dairy products.

When grease washes down the sink, it sticks to the insides of the pipes that connect your home or business to the city's sewer. It also coats the insides of the city's sewer pipes.

Eventually, the grease can build up until it completely blocks sewer pipes. That can create difficult and expensive maintenance problems for both the city and private property owners.

Blocked sewer pipes can cause raw sewage to back up into your home or business, or overflow into streets and streams.

Garbage disposals don't keep grease out of sewer pipes. Products that claim to dissolve grease may dislodge a blockage, but will only cause problems farther on down the line when the grease hardens again.

## How You Can Help

### At Home

- Don't pour grease down sink drains or toilets.
- Scrape grease and food scraps into the trash.
- Or, pour grease into steel cans, let it harden and throw in the trash.
- Catch food scraps and other solids with a strainer in the sink drain, and empty the strainer into the trash.
- Stop using your garbage disposal if possible, or try to minimize its use.



### Restaurant and Building Owners

- Recycle grease and oil.
- Don't pour grease or oil into sinks, floor drains, or onto a parking lot or street.
- Use a grease trap or interceptor that is designed, installed, and maintained correctly.
- Never put solids into grease traps or interceptors.
- Check and maintain grease traps and interceptors regularly.
- Stop using your garbage disposal if possible, or try to minimize its use.

### What Not to Flush

Grease in sewer pipes is a big problem. But there are other things that should never enter the sewer system because they can also block pipes, cause mechanical problems at pump stations or treatment plants, and pollute the environment.

Basically, the only thing you should ever flush down a toilet is human waste (urine and feces) and toilet paper. Here is a list of some of things to keep out of the toilet.

- ⊘ disposable diapers
- ⊘ paper towels
- ⊘ feminine personal hygiene products
- ⊘ cotton balls and swabs
- ⊘ unused medications (put original containers in a plastic, zip-lock bag and throw the bag in the trash)
- ⊘ condoms
- ⊘ cleaning wipes of any kind
- ⊘ facial tissue
- ⊘ bandages and bandage wrappings
- ⊘ razor blades, syringes and needles
- ⊘ disposable toilet brushes

**For more information**

**Para más información en español**

**[www.portlandonline.com/bes/whatnottoflush](http://www.portlandonline.com/bes/whatnottoflush)**

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For more information  
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## Please Keep Sewers Fat-Free

This sewer pipe (right) is  
blocked by grease buildup.

Blocked sewer pipes can cause  
raw sewage to back up into  
homes and businesses, and is  
difficult and expensive to fix.



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