

Preventing Sewer Backups

Fat, oil, and grease (FOG) are by-products of cooking found in: food scraps, meat fats, cooking oil, butter, margarine, or shortening. FOG in sewer pipes create pollution problems in Sterling Heights and many communities. It enters sewer pipes through restaurant, residential, and commercial sink drains. Once in the sewer, FOG sticks to the pipe and thickens. FOG can build up and eventually block the pipe. Blockages in sewer pipes can send sewage backward - out of manholes into streets, rivers, or up floor drains in homes. These sewage overflows pollute the environment. Cleanup costs can be expensive for residents, businesses, and the City.

Everyone is part of the solution. Follow these tips to protect our environment and keep drains clear of FOG:

- Pour or scrape greasy or oily food waste into a container or jar. Allow grease to cool or freeze in the container before throwing it in the trash;
- Do not use hot water to rinse grease off cookware, utensils, or dishes. Wipe it off with a paper towel or dish rag instead;
- Keep drains clean by pouring 1/2 cup baking soda down the drain, followed by 1/2 cup vinegar. Wait 10 to 15 minutes and then rinse with hot water.

