

FATS, OIL & GREASE (FOG)

"SIMPLE MEASURES TO HELP REDUCE THE THREAT TO PUBLIC HEALTH,
HELP CONTROL COSTS AND PREVENT LEGAL ACTION OR FINES"



At Valley Sanitary District FOG is not a haze that rolls inland from the ocean but rather an acronym for Fats, Oil & Grease (FOG). FOG is a combination of meat fats from cooking, oil from salad dressings and dairy products including butter. The disposal of FOG into the sewer system from restaurants and homes can:

- Cause sewer stoppages and overflows that may pose a public health risk to all sewer system users not just those discharging FOG.
- Expose Valley Sanitary District to legal actions or fines for FOG related stoppages.
- Increase collection system sewer and treatment plant operating costs.

Restaurant operators and homeowners can help prevent FOG related problems by following these basic practices:

- Not pouring fats, oil or grease into the sink or garbage disposal. Allowing fats, oils or grease to cool, placing them in a sealable container and disposing them with the regular garbage.
- Scraping and dry wiping pots, pans and dishes with disposable towels before washing and disposing of the soiled towels with the regular garbage.
- Using sink strainers to catch food scraps and disposing them with the regular garbage.

Restaurants and other non domestic FOG generators follow the same basic principals outlined above but through a slightly more formal program using what are called kitchen best management practices (BMP's). BMP's also include pumping grease interceptors on a regular schedule and performing preventative maintenance or repairs for effective operation.

In 2006 The State Water Resources Control Board (SWRCB) mandated sewerage agencies that own pipeline collection systems to implement a Sewer System Management Plan (SSMP). Part of this SSMP was implemented due to FOG related sewer pipeline stoppages. This program requires agencies including Valley Sanitary District, to evaluate the impact of FOG on the sewer system and implement policies and procedures to control the discharge of FOG into the sewer system. Valley Sanitary District maintains an active FOG program to stay in compliance with this requirement. Failure to remain in compliance with this program can subject Valley Sanitary District to fines; civil action or criminal prosecution.

Discharge to the sewer is a privilege. Each Valley Sanitary District customer owns a portion of the sewer collection system and treatment plant. With this ownership comes the responsibility to properly use the system and to prevent FOG related public health threats caused by Fats, Oil & Grease.. Reducing FOG discharge to the sewer system reduces maintenance cost that translates into a savings for each VSD customer.