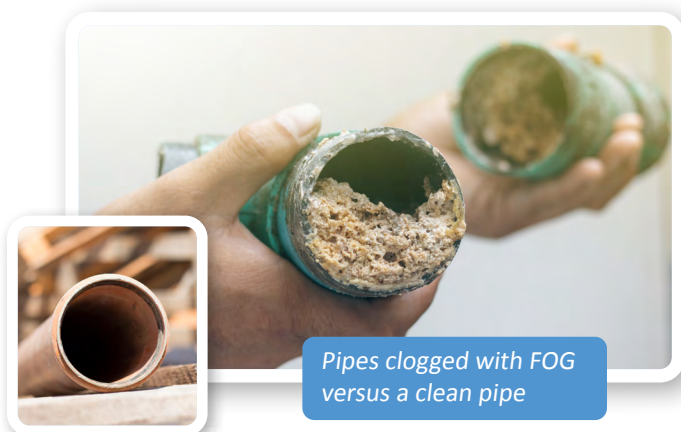


# STORMWATER POLLUTION PREVENTION GREASE CONTROL FOR FOOD FACILITIES

## The Problem with Fats, Oil, and Grease

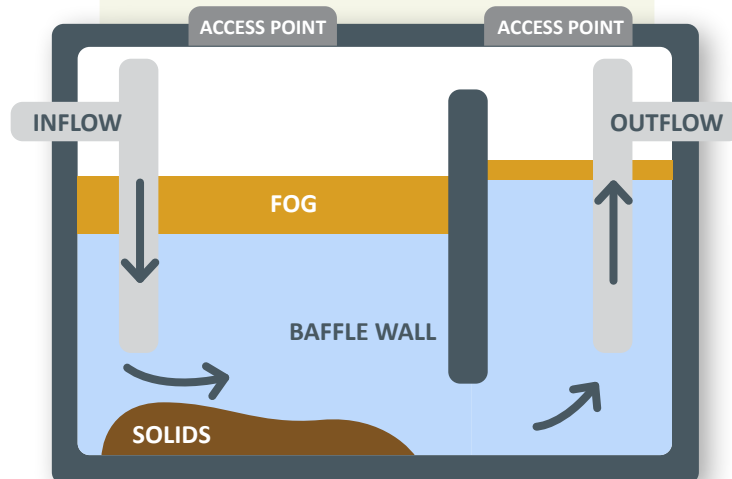
Food facilities are a significant source of Fats, Oils, and Grease (FOG) that enter the sanitary sewer treatment system. FOG can come from meat, lard, salad dressings, and dairy products. These sources are transferred from dishes, pots, pans, and other surfaces into sinks and floor drains that enter the sewer system, clogging pipes and leading to sanitary sewer overflows. Overflows impact your business and may result in expensive fines and cleanup costs. Additionally, overflows can negatively impact public health, waterways, and the storm drain system. Preventing FOG from entering the sanitary sewer system helps to avoid these problems.



**Sanitary sewer overflows are the release of raw sewage from the City's sanitary sewer system into the public right-of-way or into businesses or homes.**

### What is a Grease Control Device?

- ◆ A Grease Control Device (GCD) is a type of equipment found inside kitchens or outside food facilities designed to separate FOG and solid food waste from kitchen wastewater.
- ◆ Properly maintained GCDs reduce the buildup of FOG and solid waste in plumbing systems, and decrease the possibility of blockages and sanitary sewer overflows.



*General GCD internal schematic, models vary*

Various kitchen fixtures are connected to the inflow piping allowing FOG, water, and solids to enter the GCD. The baffle wall slows the rate of flow allowing FOG to rise and solids to settle. The remaining gray water should be the only substance going into the outflow piping that goes to the sanitary sewer.

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## Signs Your GCD Isn't Functioning Properly

- ◆ Your sinks are draining slowly, possibly due to FOG and solid food waste buildup in the GCD.
- ◆ Blockages in pipes downstream of the GCD could indicate inadequate cleaning frequency or missing or damaged parts such as the removable baffle plate, or that a food facility's GCD is not sized correctly for its menu and number of meals served.
- ◆ The GCD smells foul, likely because solids are filling the bottom quickly or pump-out maintenance needs to be increased.
- ◆ Water levels in the GCD or floor drains are high, possibly due to FOG-related blockages.
- ◆ Water levels in the GCD are very low, indicating rust holes or punctures in the device.

## Tips on Routine GCD Maintenance

- ◆ **Observe the 25% Rule!** Have the GCD pumped out and cleaned by a professional when it is twenty-five percent (25%) full of FOG and solid food waste or within 30 days of the last pumping for indoor devices and 90 days of the last pumping for outdoor devices, whichever comes first. Figure 1 on the right shows how the 25% rule is calculated by adding the FOG and solids layer and then dividing by the total length.
- ❑ Hire a licensed, professional grease-hauling company. Grease haulers should wash and scrape all sides and surfaces inside the GCD and completely pump out all contents each time the GCD is maintained. Staff at your food facility are not permitted to remove the contents of GCDs.
- ❑ Scrape grease and food waste to the compost before washing dishes to minimize the amount of grease and solids going into the GCD and to improve performance.
- ❑ Do not add products like solvents or enzymes into GCDs to treat or emulsify FOG or to supplement GCD maintenance, unless your facility has been given permission by the City.
- ❑ Keep maintenance records for a minimum of three years. Records must be readily available for review by inspectors. Failure to maintain records is a violation of the City of Palo Alto's Municipal Code and may result in non-compliance notices.
- ❑ Ensure compliance by uploading GCD maintenance documents digitally using [www.fogregister.com/paloalto](http://www.fogregister.com/paloalto). No need to keep paper copies!
- ❑ For a complete list of maintenance requirements, refer to the **Palo Alto Municipal Code**.

Figure 1:  
25% Rule Schematic

