

TOWN OF LIBERTY

How Fats, Oils, and Grease Affect our Sewer System

The Town of Liberty's **sanitary sewer system** is made up of pipes called sewer mains and laterals which connect our homes and businesses to public sewage treatment facilities. Sewer laterals run underground connecting your house to the public sewer main under the road.

When fats, oils, and grease are flushed down sinks, drains, or toilets, it causes problems for both you and the Town. These blockages will gradually restrict the flow of wastewater from your house, leading to sewage back-ups and the resulting damage. They also deposit grease in the public sewer main which negatively impacts the Town's sewer system and can cause problems for numerous houses and businesses.

How do fats, oils, and grease cause sewer blockages?

When fats, oils, and grease are poured or flushed down your sinks, drains, or toilets they enter the sewer system where they cool, harden and stick to the inner walls of sewer pipes. Over time, as more fats, oils, and grease are added to the system, these sewer blockages build-up and harden until they completely plug the pipes. The hardness of the blockages makes them very difficult and costly to clean out.

The most common sources of household fats, oils, and grease are:

- meats and other food scraps (including baked goods)
- sauces, gravies, and salad dressings
- dairy products (milk, cream, yogurt, kefir, cheese)
- fats, lards, cooking oil, shortening, butter, and margarine
- cosmetics and toiletries (makeup, lotions, some soaps and oils)

How can you help prevent sewer system blockages?

- **NEVER** pour grease or any of the above products down drains or into toilets.
- **ALWAYS** use drain baskets/strainers to catch food scraps and other solids. Empty the basket/strainer into your trash.

What is the Town of Liberty doing to address the problem?

The Town regularly inspects sewer mains and cleans with high pressure or mechanical devices. Typically, the Town inspects all sewer mains once every five years. Additionally, sewer mains are video inspected to determine the condition of the pipe at the time.

The Town responds immediately to clear any sewer blockages. In freezing temperatures, incrustated grease is almost impossible to remove, and high pressure equipment freezes making removal a difficult task. Mechanical methods can be used to dislodge stubborn incrustation, but this can be damaging to the sewer mains.

If during the process of investigation, any structural defects are found, the Town schedules repairs to sewer mains or laterals, to fix the problem.

If you have any additional questions, please call the Public Works Director at 336-622-2154.