

GREASE TRAP CLEANING GUIDE

A practical guide to cleaning small grease control devices (under 50 gallons)

Tools and Materials

- 2, 5 gallon food service buckets or something similar
- Absorbent material (unscented cat litter or 'floor dry' available at auto-parts stores, or other absorbent material such as old bread, shredded newspaper etc.)
- Hand tools and safety equipment: tools to open the trap, scraper, disposable gloves, safety glasses
- Tools for removing contents: scoop or wet/dry vacuum
- Clean rags or paper towels

Read Before You Begin

- Make certain that you measure the grease layer and solids layer as you proceed through the cleaning. This information is critical for you to pass your FOG Inspections.
- Coordinate with your FOG inspector to develop an appropriate maintenance schedule. Every situation is different and you must maintain the trap at <25% FOG as well as meet the ordinance requirements.
- Clear the work area of any food items and cover or protect clean dishware and surfaces.
- Be certain that any tools used for the cleaning are clearly marked for "Waste Only" so they cannot be confused with food handling utensils in the future.
- Be certain to reassemble the trap correctly after cleaning. The arrangement of baffles and T's is critical to the proper functioning of the trap. Refer to installation or owner's manual for guidance.
- Remember it is ILLEGAL to dump grease trap or kitchen waste in the sanitary sewer system (toilets, cleanouts, manholes, etc.) or into storm drains, ponds, or any outdoor area. That means you CANNOT take a grease trap outside in order to pressure wash it clean.
- Waste from the grease trap does NOT go into the Used Cooking Oil (yellow grease) container. Dispose of it as outlined below.

Cleaning The Grease Trap – Step by Step

- Assemble tools
- Open trap (avoid damaging any rubber gaskets)
- Measure and record grease layer using a clear plastic cup (on which you have marked a scale in inches)
- Observe the manner in which the internal parts are installed because you'll need to reinstall them properly after you finish cleaning the trap.
- Remove grease layer to bucket and use enough absorbent to solidify grease and oil
- Remove water layer into the second bucket and set it aside. It is normal for a small amount of grease and food solids to get into the water layer due to disturbing the trap.
- Now that the settled solids layer is more assessable – use the clear plastic cup to measure the depth of the solids in inches and record on log sheet.
- Remove settled solids layer and put in bucket with solidified grease.
- Gently scrap the inside of the trap to remove large chunks of debris.
- Do not use hot water, degreasers or soaps to clean the trap.

- Re-assemble the internal parts of trap
- Slowly pour the bucket of water waste back into the trap.
- Secure lid.
- If any repairs are needed schedule them immediately.
- When repairs have been completed - be certain to retain the repair tickets for 3 years.

The advantages of frequent grease trap cleaning

- **CLEAN WITH EASE.** The more frequently the trap is cleaned the easier it will be
- **NO CLOGS.** Regular cleanings help keep sewer pipes clean and reduce backups due to clogged lines
- **LONGER TRAP LIFE.** Rotting foods create acids which eat away at the internal components and tank, reducing the lifespan of the trap and leading to increased repair and replacement costs.
- **FEWER SMELLS AND ODORS.** The longer waste is trapped – the stronger the odors.

ANY QUESTIONS?

Please feel free to contact the City of Chesapeake FOG Office at 382-3418
for assistance, or e-mail us at fog@chesapeake.gov.