

HOW TO CLEAN A SMALL GREASE TRAP - FAQ's & INSTRUCTION

FAQ's

AM I ALLOWED TO CLEAN THE GREASE TRAP MYSELF?

Is the grease trap capacity <50 gallons?

NO – you must have the grease trap professionally cleaned

YES – you can clean the grease trap yourself

SHOULD I CALL A PLUMBER/GREASE HAULER?

If you suspect that the trap has not been serviced recently then it is best to hire a professional.

Here is why:

1. The contents of an improperly maintained trap become very corrosive and can cause bolts and lids to seize over time. A plumber will be better able to open the trap.
2. Cleaning a poorly maintained trap is an unpleasant task due to the odor from rotted food solids. When the trap is cleaned on a regular basis – the smell is not nearly so strong. And usually a well maintained trap smells about as bad as a dirty dishwasher.
3. The quantity of grease and solids to be removed is likely to be excessive, and difficult to dispose of properly.
4. You need to determine if the trap needs repair. This is best done by a plumber. Grease traps are simple devices and missing or broken parts will essentially render it useless. It is also very helpful to take a photo of the empty, re-assembled trap after the plumber has checked it over. That way you have reference photo to look at when reassembling the trap after cleaning.
5. It is easier to do the job correctly when you've seen someone else do it first. Keep in mind that even though it is your first time cleaning a trap (and disposing of the waste) – if you do it wrong – you are still responsible.

DOES EVERYONE THAT CLEANS THE GREASE TRAP HAVE TO BE FOG CERTIFIED?

No, however the person cleaning the trap must be an employee of the restaurant, not a temporary worker. Anyone hired from the outside to perform this work must be certified as a Grease Hauler through HRFOG.COM.

IF I USUALLY CLEAN THE GREASE TRAP, CAN I HIRE A PROFESSIONAL GREASE HAULER ON OCCASION?

Yes, that is entirely up to you. Complete records of the cleaning must be kept either way.

I CLEANED THE GREASE TRAP BUT I FORGET TO RECORD THE INFORMATION.

Not recording the grease trap cleaning is a violation.

INSTRUCTIONS

This procedure is for commercial kitchens that are cleaning their own grease traps and using their own employees. This procedure is not to be used by professional trap cleaning companies.

TOOLS NEEDED:

- Protective gear: gloves, eye protection
- Tools you need to open the trap lid (screwdriver, Allen wrench or adjustable wrench).
- Tape measure
- A plastic putty knife or plastic scraper to clean inside of trap
- Flashlight
- Unscented cat litter (your needs may vary but have at least 10 pounds on hand)
- 2, 5-gallon food pails or similar (larger traps will need additional pails)
- A clear tall disposable plastic cup on which you have made 1 inch marks to assist measurements
- A scoop to remove contents of trap
- It is very helpful to cover the work area with flattened cardboard boxes to protect floors from spills.
- Be aware that any tool or container used for waste must be clearly marked WASTE ONLY

PROCEDURE:

1. Open trap (be gentle with the gasket – they are very difficult to replace effectively)
2. Measure trap depth (using a stiff piece of cardboard as a dipstick – determine how deep the total fluid level is i.e. from the bottom of the trap to the top of the grease). This only needs to be done once and recorded. Unless you replace the grease trap – this value should never change.
3. Measure grease layer (with the marked clear plastic cup) do not use it as a “cup measure” use it as a periscope. In other words - the cup stays empty.
4. Scoop out grease (put it in one of the 5 gallon pails with enough cat litter or other absorbent to completely absorb the grease).
5. Scoop out most of water into the second bucket and set it aside. (Do not worry if there are traces of oil and solids in the water.)
6. Measure solids (with the marked clear plastic cup).
7. Scoop out solids and place in the bucket with the already absorbed grease. (There is no need for you to absorb the fluid from the solids, but the grease and oil must be absorbed completely.)
8. Scrape inside of trap clean if needed (best to use a plastic tool to avoid scoring the trap).
9. Reassemble trap baffles (Be sure they go back in the correct position – they are not interchangeable.)
10. Dispose of the water directly into trap prior to closing lid or pour water down sink drain that flows back into grease trap.
11. Close and secure lid. There is no need to over-tighten bolts.
12. Record cleaning information
13. Seal waste container and dispose of in dumpster.