

## Grease Trap 101

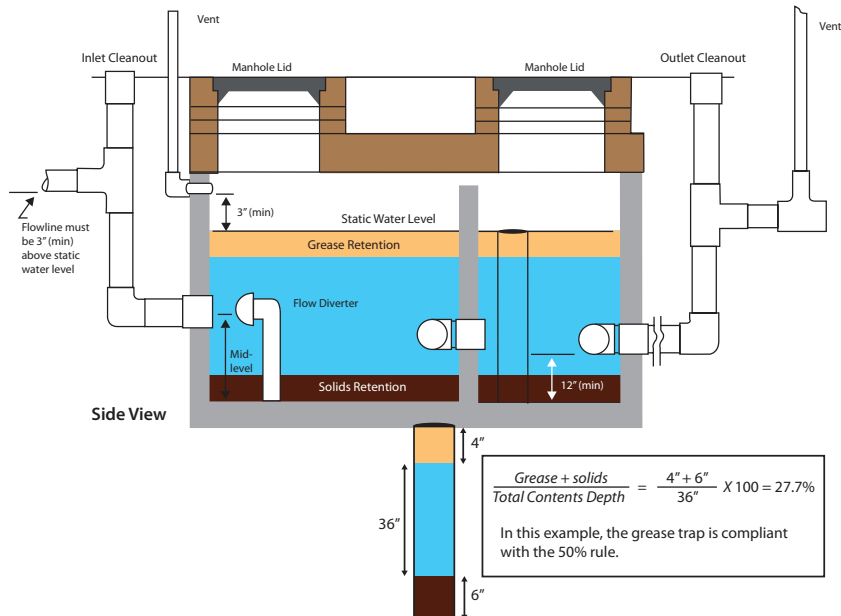
A grease trap, or grease interceptor, is a device designed to trap and separate fats, oils, and grease (FOG) and food solids from wastewater. The separated grease and solids are held in the grease trap, allowing the remaining wastewater to pass into the city sewer system.



To operate properly, grease and solids must be removed from the grease trap regularly. This practice prevents the separated FOG and solids from flowing into plumbing and city sewer lines. Best management practices can be used in the kitchen to prevent excessive build-up of FOG and solids in your grease trap.

The size of your grease trap is based on many factors, including the number and type of plumbing fixtures in your kitchen and the type of food preparation conducted at your facility. Grease trap sizing is determined during the building permit and site development process. You can log on to our website to get more information on grease trap design and approval.

### The Percent Solids Calculation, are you Compliant?



### Questions?

Call the Austin Water Utility's Special Services Division at 512-972-1060, or visit our website for more information at [www.austintexas.gov/department/grease-trap-maintenance](http://www.austintexas.gov/department/grease-trap-maintenance)

Only you can  
**STOP the GREASE BLOB**



**Clogs your pipes  
Backs up sewers  
Spills raw sewage  
Costs you money**

**Restaurant's Guide to Grease Traps**

## Grease Trap Guidance

In the City of Austin, all commercial and institutional food preparation businesses must have a grease trap, also known as a grease interceptor, approved by Austin Water. Austin City Code Chapter 15-10 requires that all grease traps be pumped out at least once every three months OR sooner if the contents of the trap contains 50% or more of grease and solids.

### Failing to pump out your grease trap as often as required can:

- Clog your plumbing,
- Cost your business money and downtime.
- Cause smelly sewage overflows in your neighborhood.
- Damage the environment.



Grease found in the city sewer system can be traced back to the source and the costs of repairs and clean up can be passed on to the violator.



Grease flowing into the sanitary sewer from a food service establishment service line.



An overflow from a grease trap in the parking lot of a food service establishment.



Excessive grease entering the floor drain from a dishwashing sink. Using best management practices in your kitchen can help to prevent overloading your grease trap.



A city manhole choked by grease which passed through a poorly maintained grease trap.

## Staying in Compliance

- Pump your grease trap at least once every 3 months or sooner if 50% or more of the contents of the trap are made up of grease and solids.
- Use a permitted liquid waste hauler. You can find a list of [permitted liquid waste haulers on our website](#).
- Maintain a copy of the waste manifest for each pump out for a period of at least 3 years. Keep these records on-site. To see a copy of an example waste manifest, [visit our website](#).
- Never use enzymes, chemicals, or similar agents in a manner which will cause grease to pass through the grease trap. This practice is prohibited by city ordinance.

## Best Management Practices

To prevent the Grease Blob from finding you, use these Best Management Practices in your food service establishment:

- Scrape food scraps into the trash, not the sink.
- Use paper towels to wipe grease from pots, pans, plates, and utensils prior to washing.
- Use sink strainers to catch food particles.
- Post “No Grease” signs above sinks.
- Recycle waste cooking oil (yellow grease) using a waste oil bin with a tight fitting lid.
- Train and educate staff about the importance of proper grease disposal to protect your facility’s plumbing and Austin’s environment.
- Sweep floors first to remove all trash and debris before washing them down. Never remove floor drain grates.
- Be present for grease trap pump outs, talk to the hauler about the percentage of grease and solids in your trap, and inspect the trap’s condition.



## NEVER

- Pour cooking oil or grease residue down the drain.
- Use food grinders or disposals, these devices are prohibited in commercial kitchens in the Austin Water jurisdiction.

