

How can you have fat-free sewers?

Here are some ways you can help protect the environment, your pipes, and Modesto's collection system:

- Never pour grease material down sink drains or toilets.
- Scrape grease material and food scraps from all cookware and dishware into a can or the trash for disposal.
- Use strainers in sink drains to catch food scraps and other solids, and empty the drain strainers into the trash for disposal.
- Don't put grease or greasy food in your home garbage disposal. These units only shred solid material into smaller pieces and do not prevent grease from going down the drain.
- Wipe cookware and dishware prior to washing. Don't rely on commercial additives in detergents to dissolve grease: They may just pass it down the line and cause problems in other areas.
- Cooking grease should be placed in the black curb container with the normal weekly garbage. It would be advisable to allow the grease to cool so as to not melt plastic garbage bags. Seal the plastic bags to prevent leakage.
- Clean kitchen exhaust system filters routinely.
- Talk with your friends and neighbors about the grease problem so that the community is aware of the risk.
- Call the City of Modesto if you have any questions about sewer system operations and maintenance.

For more information about sanitary sewer systems, contact the City of Modesto Water Quality Control Section,

**City of Modesto Water Quality Hotline:
209-577-6200**

or the following:

Water Environment Federation

601 Wythe Street
Alexandria, VA 22314-1994
Phone: 703-684-2400
Fax: 703-684-2492
Web site: www.wef.org

U.S. Environmental Protection Agency

Office of Wastewater Management
Ariel Rios Building
1200 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW
Washington, D.C. 20460
Web site: www.epa.gov/owm



Excerpts in this brochure were adapted with permission from the Water Environment Federation's copyrighted 1999 brochure Fat-Free Sewers: How to Prevent Fat, Oils, and Greases from damaging your home and the environment. It is for general information only and is not intended to be a standard set by WEF.

FAT-FREE SEWERS



**Fats, Oil, and Grease;
They're not just bad for your
arteries and waistline,
they're bad for your home's
plumbing and Modesto sanitary
sewers.**



Fat, Oil, and Grease...

Are the number one cause of sewer backups in homes and food service establishments.

Why is fat, oil, and grease a problem?

Even a small amount of grease in sink drains can cause serious blockages in home plumbing or, even worse, a sewer overflow in your home or yard. The substances also cause clogging in Modesto's wastewater collection system. Grease in a warm liquid may not appear harmful. But as the liquid cools, it congeals and sediment forms on the interior of pipes and treatment equipment. This hardened grease can block a sewer line completely and may upset Modesto's wastewater treatment plant processes.

Where is grease produced?

Restaurants, condominiums, apartment buildings, homes, schools, churches, food-processing plants, shopping malls, hospitals, hotels, and many more locations all produce grease. Grease is a by-product of cooking and is found in things like these:

- Meat fats
- Lard
- Cooking oil
- Shortening
- Butter and margarine
- Food scraps
- Baking goods
- Sauces
- Dairy products

Grease is often washed down the kitchen sink and into the plumbing system. The grease can build up over time and block your drains or sewer.



Never pour grease down sink drains, scrape grease and food scraps from all cookware and dishes in a can or the trash for disposal.

The easiest way to prevent grease-related overflows of sewage is to keep fat, oil, and grease out of the sewer system.

What problems are caused by grease?

- Sanitary sewer overflows in neighborhood parks, yards, and streets or backups into your home.
- Rancid odors.
- Expensive cleanup, repair, and replacement of damaged property.
- Potential contact with microorganisms that can cause illness.
- Higher operating and maintenance costs potentially resulting in higher sewer bills for you.

Why should you care?

Grease-related problems can cause sewage backups and overflows that are messy, costly, and a potential threat to your health and the environment. That is why Modesto wants to help consumers stop the problems associated with grease before they occur.