



INSIDE



You know grease clogs your arteries. But did you also know it can stop up the water distribution system?



How simple is this? Get small parts for under \$1 and save yourself big bucks in less than an hour.



Nature hibernates in winter, and your water sprinkler should take a break, too. Learn proper winter watering techniques.

fguaNEWS

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updates & information from your water and wastewater utility

Fat-Free Sewers

How to Prevent Fats, Oils, and Greases from Damaging your Home and the Environment

Fats, oils, and greases aren't just bad for your arteries and your waistline; they're bad for sewers, too. Sewer overflows and backups can cause health hazards, damage home interiors, and threaten the environment. An increasingly common cause of overflows is sewer pipes blocked by grease. Grease gets into the sewer from household drains as well as from poorly maintained grease traps in restaurants and other businesses.

Where Does The Grease Come From?

Most of us know grease as the byproduct of cooking. Grease is found in such things as:

- Meat Fats
- Lard
- Cooking Oil
- Shortening
- Baking Goods
- Food Scraps
- Butter
- Margarine
- Dairy Products
- Sauces

Too often, grease is washed into the plumbing system, usually through the kitchen sink. Grease sticks to the insides of sewer pipes (both on the property and in the streets). Over time, the grease may build up and block the entire pipe.

Home garbage disposals do not keep grease out of the plumbing system. These units only shred solid material into smaller pieces and do not prevent grease from going down the drain.



Commercial additives, including detergents that claim to dissolve grease may pass grease down the line and cause problems in other areas.

The Results Can Be Distasteful:

- Raw sewage overflowing in you home or your neighbor's homes;
- An expensive and unpleasant cleanup that often must be paid for by you, the homeowner;
- Raw sewage overflowing into parks, yards, and streets;
- Potential contact with disease-causing organisms; and
- An increase in operation and maintenance costs for local sewer departments, which causes higher sewer bills for customers.

What Can We Do To Help

- The easiest way to solve the grease problem and help prevent overflows of raw sewage is to keep these materials out of the sewer system in the first place. There are several ways to do this.
- Never pour grease down sinks or into toilets
 - Scrape grease and food scraps from trays, plates, pots, pans, utensils, and grills and cooking surfaces into a can or the trash for disposal (or recycling where available).
 - Do not put grease down garbage disposals. Put baskets/strainers in sink drains to catch food scraps and other solids, and empty the drain baskets/strainers into the trash for disposal.

South Florida Water Management District Adopts Stricter Water Restrictions

Effective January 15, 2008, The South Florida Water

Management District adopted one day a week water restrictions. All FGUA customers in Lee and Collier counties should water no more than 1 day per week. Please visit the FGUA website at www.fgua.com and use the links on the home page to view the Phase III restrictions press release and FAQs flyer to determine your designated irrigation day. For more information, please visit the water management district's website at www.sfwmd.gov.

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QUICK NOTES

Important Customer Note:

For after hours emergencies and billing inquiries, please call 866/866-4382. This number is also listed on your utility bill.

System Projects: The Lehigh Acres and Golden Gate systems have a program to track various operational issues. Ongoing projects include valve maintenance, fire hydrant flushing, inspection and maintenance, manhole inspection to identify sources of infiltration and inflow into the system, lift station maintenance and inspection to ensure the lift stations are cleaned and maintained properly and flushing of dead-end mains to ensure proper chlorine residuals throughout the systems.

Dripping Faucets: Dripping faucets are a common problem. Sadly, most people will ignore a dripping faucet out of fear or ignorance. What most people do not know is that it can be fixed quite simply. In fact the repair will usually cost you less than a dollar and less than an hour of your time. Making the repair should be on the top of your priorities not only because it causes an annoying sound that echoes through out the night, but also because a **faucet that leaks one drip per second wastes almost 20 gallons of water a month.**

Comments about FGUA News?

Contact Yvette Hartsfield, Editor, at yhartsfield@govmserv.com

>> Fat-Free, from front

• Speak with your friends and neighbors about the problem of grease in the sewer system and how to keep it out. Call your local sewer system authority if you have any questions.

What Restaurants and Building Owners need to Know About Grease Traps or Interceptors

Restaurants, large buildings, such as apartment complexes; and other commercial establishments may have grease traps or interceptors that keep grease out of the sewer system. For a grease trap or interceptor to work correctly, it must be properly:

- **Designed** (sized and manufactured to handle the amount that is expected),
- **Installed** (level, vented, etc.),
- **Maintained** (cleaned and serviced on a frequent basis).

Solids should never be put into grease traps or interceptors. Routine, often daily, maintenance of grease traps and interceptors is needed to ensure that they properly reduce or prevent blockages.

Be cautious of chemicals and additives (including soaps and detergents) that claim to dissolve grease. Some of these additives simply pass grease down pipes where it can clog the sewer lines in another area.

Source: Cooperative Agreement Assistance #CX824505 between the Water Environment Federation (WEF) and the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency.

Winter Lawn & Landscape

During the winter you will notice a difference in your lawn and plants. These are indicators that it is time to change the way we irrigate our lawns and landscape. Cooler temperatures may cause plant growth limitations, therefore irrigation frequency should change. Be careful to follow any current water restrictions. Otherwise, irrigate your lawns and landscapes once every 7–14 days from November to March if needed. If your lawn consists of drought-tolerant landscape you may not need any supplemental irrigation. Wilting plants indicate that watering is needed. The best method to reducing water use in the winter is to plant

drought-tolerant plant material. When watering with a sprinkler system, drip and micro-spray systems are the most efficient systems. These systems are easy to install and to maintain. By choosing and maintaining systems correctly, you can reduce your water bills.



Project updates for Lehigh Acres/ Golden Gate

LEHIGH ACRES I & I REMOVAL

The interior of over two miles of force mains were lined in a planned effort to reduce water infiltration into the older pipes in Lehigh Acres, thus reducing the flow into the wastewater treatment facility. **This project complete.**

HOMESTEAD ROAD FORCE MAIN INSTALLATION

The installation of a new 12-inch sewer force main from Homestead Road and Milwaukee Road to Leeland Heights Boulevard and Lee Boulevard is **complete**. The project **also included** the installation of a new 16-inch sewer force main from Leeland Heights Boulevard and Lee Boulevard to the Lehigh Wastewater Treatment Plant.

STORAGE PAINTING Painting of water and wastewater tanks is **finished** at plants in both Lehigh Acres and Golden Gate. The elevated water storage tank in Lehigh Acres is scheduled for a fresh coat of paint.

MIRROR LAKES WATER TREATMENT PLANT

This water plant is currently under construction and scheduled to be **online in February** to serve the Lehigh Acres System.

DEEP INJECTION WELL

We have an **approved permit** for a new deep injection well in the Golden Gate system. This will help dispose of wastewater by-products. Drilling has begun at the Golden Gate Wastewater Plant site. Once completed, the wastewater will safely be injected nearly 3,500 feet underground-well below drinking water standards. This common method is approved by all federal and state regulatory agencies.

