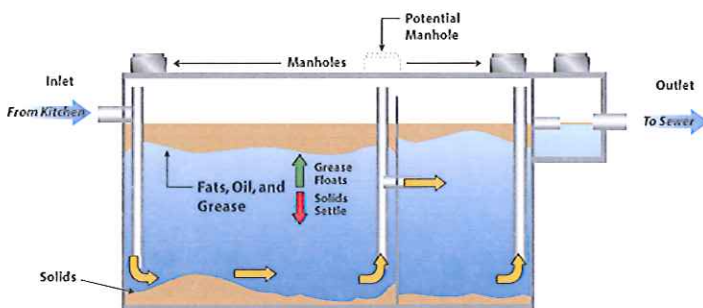


FATS, OILS AND GREASE CONTROL PROGRAM TOOL KIT

CLEANING AND/OR MAINTENANCE OF GREASE CONTROL DEVICES

CONVENTIONAL GREASE INTERCEPTORS

Conventional grease interceptors operate by gravity separation. Given sufficient space and time, floating grease and settled solids separate from the kitchen wastewater and slowly accumulate in the interceptor (see the figure below).



CONVENTIONAL GREASE INTERCEPTOR Outdoor, In-ground-Precast Concrete (Typical)

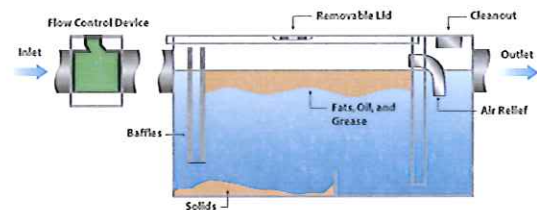
For the interceptor to perform correctly, the floating grease and settled solids must be removed before they accumulate beyond a certain level to avoid clogging the plumbing in the interceptor or significantly reducing the overall space in the interceptor, which affects the ability of the interceptor to separate the waste material from the wastewater. The standard maintenance level for floating grease and settled solids accumulation is "The 25% Rule." According to "The 25% Rule," if the combined accumulation of floating grease and or settled solids exceeds 25% of the capacity of the interceptor, the interceptor must be cleaned (pumped) by a waste hauler. The "25% Rule" or a similar standard has been adopted and is now being enforced by many sewerage agencies around the country.

Many agencies require that conventional grease interceptors be cleaned at a mandatory minimum frequency to prevent the over-accumulation of floating grease and settled solids. Minimum quarterly cleaning is perhaps the most common requirement, but some agencies require more frequent cleaning (e.g., monthly cleaning). Although more frequent cleaning may be appropriate for some restaurants with unusually high grease discharge, this is likely overkill for a vast majority of restaurants.

It is important that conventional grease interceptors be pumped out completely when they are cleaned. Otherwise the settled solids will accumulate and eventually clog the internal plumbing in the interceptor. At the very least, the decay of the solids over time will generate hydrogen sulfide gas and unpleasant odors (rotten egg smell). Many agencies require that conventional grease interceptors be fully pumped out every time due to these concerns.

GREASE TRAP¹

Grease traps also operate by gravity separation; however, grease traps use a flow control device and baffles to allow the separation of floating FOG and settled solids in a much smaller tank (see the figure below).



GREASE TRAP Indoor, Above Ground (Typical)

Like a conventional grease interceptor, in order for a grease trap to perform correctly, the floating FOG and settled solids must be removed regularly. However, since grease traps are significantly smaller than conventional grease interceptors, the necessary frequency of cleaning is much greater. Minimum weekly cleaning is required by some agencies. Some restaurants may have to clean out their grease trap more often than weekly due to unusually high grease discharge from specific fixtures. It is reasonable for most restaurants to conduct weekly checks or cleaning of the grease trap to ensure proper operation.

Grease trap cleaning is typically conducted by restaurant staff; however, some agencies require that pumping companies conduct the cleaning. This is problematic for most restaurants since the cost of using a pumping company for such a frequent basic cleaning practice may discourage the restaurant from cleaning the grease trap as often as it is needed.

¹ Grease Removal Devices (GRDs) are very similar to grease traps in terms of their size and how they separate the oil and grease from the wastewater. Due to their automatic grease removal design, grease removal devices do not require as much cleaning as grease traps, but they typically require more frequent maintenance.