



HEALTH CARE AGENCY/PUBLIC HEALTH ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH INFORMATIONAL BULLETIN

TO: FOOD FACILITY OWNERS/OPERATORS

SUBJECT: GREASE CONTROL DEVICES – INSTALLATION AND MAINTENANCE

Fats, oils, and grease (FOG) have been cited as major causes of sanitary sewer overflows. State law requires cities and wastewater agencies to develop effective FOG control programs to reduce sanitary sewer overflows (SSOs). While grease control devices are recognized as one part of a comprehensive FOG control program, the California Retail Food Code establishes structural and operational requirements for all food establishments. This bulletin applies to grease removal devices to be installed inside food facilities in Orange County. Orange Environmental Health does not regulate the installation of grease removal devices when installed outside.

Grease control devices are designed to prevent grease from entering the sewer system and are generally one of three types:

- Gravity grease interceptors (GGI) – also known as grease interceptors, are installed underground and must be installed outdoors according to approved plumbing codes. GGIs are generally considered the Best Available Technology for FOG control.
- Hydromechanical grease interceptors (HGI) – also known as grease traps, are generally installed indoors, near a utensil sink. HGIs are recognized as a less expensive alternative than GGIs, and can be effective for FOG control if they are properly installed and diligently maintained.
- Grease removal devices (GRD) – are similar to hydromechanical grease interceptors but include extra automatic grease removal features such as skimming wheels. GRDs also can be effective for FOG control if they are properly installed and diligently maintained.

To work correctly, a grease control device must be sized correctly to handle the expected grease load, installed properly per local building codes, and regularly maintained, cleaned and serviced. Prior to installing a grease control device, the food establishment owner must check with the authority having jurisdiction for grease pretreatment (city Building Department or Sanitary District). Grease control devices shall be correctly sized and properly installed in the grease waste line(s) leading from sinks and drains. Additionally, to prevent overloading the grease control device and to minimize the maintenance frequency, all visible grease, and food solids should be removed from plates and pots before washing.

HGIs and GRDs are best located outside of food handling areas although this is not always possible. HGIs and GRDs may be permitted in a food preparation area when an approved maintenance procedure is provided and followed. They shall be installed such that the floor area around the unit is easily cleanable. This can be done by elevating the unit on four legs or installing a six-inch tall steel-covered base around the perimeter of the equipment. The operation and servicing of HGIs and GRDs shall be done in a manner that will not promote unsanitary conditions. We recommend the following guidelines for servicing HGIs and GRDs within a food establishment:

- Food preparation should not occur during servicing and maintenance operations in the area where an HGI or GRD is located. Optimally, the unit should only be serviced when the facility is closed.
- Adequate and proper sanitary controls shall be utilized in the kitchen and food preparation areas to prevent contamination of food or utensils, and shall follow all applicable provisions of the California Retail Food Code.
- Signage outlining Best Management Practices for FOG control should be posted in the vicinity of the HGI or GRD to reinforce proper procedures.

If you have any questions regarding the need to install grease control devices, please contact your local building official. Questions pertaining to indoor installation of HGIs or GRDs or maintenance and operation of your food establishment should be directed to your Environmental Health Specialist at (714) 433-6000.