

Managing greasy waste in the retail food industry

Industrial waste – information sheet 23a

Background

Retail food outlets such as restaurants, cafes and lunch bars produce greasy wastewater from food preparation and cleaning activities. The grease and fat contained in wastewater can accumulate both in your drains and the Corporation's sewers, resulting in blockages and effluent overflows. The potential cost to your business associated with a drain or sewer blockage can be significant, not only in finding and clearing the blockage but also the effect it has on the normal operation of your business. You should be aware that if a sewer blockage is attributable to your business you may be required to pay the substantial cost for removing the blockage and the associated cleanup.

Requirements

To limit the amount of greasy wastewater discharged to sewer the Corporation requires businesses to have some form of wastewater pre-treatment, usually in the form of a grease arrestor. The effectiveness of any pre-treatment depends on good house keeping practices to prevent food solids and excess oil or grease being washed down the drain, and frequent servicing and maintenance of the grease arrestor by a licensed waste contractor.

Some useful tips to best manage greasy wastewater in your business and potentially save you money are:

- Recycle used fat, oil and grease. Do not pour any oil directly down the drain or into the grease arrestor.
- Scrape or wipe off rather than rinse excess food material or oil and grease from dishes, kitchen utensils and equipment.
- Use quick breakdown detergents.
- Use sink strainers/screens to prevent food solids from going into drains.
- Ensure dish washers and glass washers discharge downstream of the grease arrestor.
- Ensure all grease-bearing drain lines discharge into a grease arrestor.
- Have your grease arrestor pumped out by a licensed contractor as per the frequency stated in your Industrial Waste Permit.
- Train your employees in what they can and cannot put down the sinks and drains. Explain the purpose and function of a grease arrestor.
- Store your used cooking oil in a bunded area so that leaks and spills cannot drain into the sewer or stormwater systems.

More information

For more information please phone **13 13 95**.