

# Fats, Oils, and Grease (FOGs)

**FOGs** are fats, oils, and grease – substances commonly used in or produced by the preparation of food, including meats, sauces, gravy, dressings, deep-fried foods, baked goods, cheese, and butter.

Producers of FOGs can be divided into four primary categories:

- Commercial Kitchens
- Temporary Vendors
- Food Processing Plants and Factories
- Residential Users

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## Why Do FOGs Matter?

When discharged into storm sewer systems through improper disposal, FOGs can cause serious clogs, backing up the sewer system and negatively impacting water quality, in turn creating potentially serious health hazards.

FOG releases can create a film on the water surface, limiting oxygen and reducing the oxygen available for aquatic life, leading to conditions like dead zones.

Excessive FOG can contribute to algal blooms, disruption of ecosystems, and the closure of waterway to recreation.

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## Management of FOGs and Considerations:

### Mobile Vendors

Mobile vendors are typically regulated by the County Health Department and must list a commissary kitchen where the vendor can prepare their food and dispose of waste. As many mobile vendors travel to attend events, waste disposal for mobile vendors can be particularly challenging. Providing safe and convenient waste disposal at events may better serve your vendors and avoid mismanagement of waste.

### Recycling Options

There may be recycling options in your area, such as food grease drop-off at your local wastewater treatment plant (WWTP). It's great to ensure the options are available to businesses and community members.

### Community Collaboration

Working with local businesses and community groups to promote FOG reduction initiatives can be accomplished by increased outreach, partnership, and collaboration between the following community groups:

- County Health Department
- Local WWTP
- Special Event Coordinators and Committees
- Local Sustainability Commission
- Management of the local drop-off location for FOG collection
- Local Watershed Group
- Regional MS4 Partnership Programs

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## How Can MS4s Help?

### Public Education and Outreach

- Educate Food Service Establishments (FSEs) and mobile vendors on the proper and safe handling of FOGs.
- Educate FSEs on structural and non-structural Best Management Practices (BMPs) for FOG control, including proper disposal, staff training, and routine cleaning of grease traps/interceptors.
- Encourage FSEs to explore re-use or recycling options.
- Educate homeowners on simple habits to minimize FOG in their household wastewater.
- Share resources through multiple platforms and in multiple languages to best reach all members of your community.
- Offer workshops and training sessions.

### Illicit Discharge Detection and Elimination Program

- Investigate and address reports of illegal dumping or discharges of FOG into the storm drain system.
- Ensure appropriate enforcement actions are taken against violations of the local ordinances related to FOG disposal.

### Sewer System Maintenance

- Implement and enforce FSE grease trap/interceptor maintenance programs. If the MS4 Coordinator is not responsible for the program, offer supplemental support and collaborate on ways to implement and enforce the program, such as completing routine inspections or requiring submittals of maintenance records.

## Available Resources:

### Helpful Flyers:

- Stormwater Protection: Food Trucks ([English](#) / [Español](#))
- Stormwater Protection: Restaurants ([English](#) / [Español](#))

### US EPA and National Level Resources:

- [Portland, Oregon](#)
- [San Francisco, California](#)
- [United States Fats Oils & Grease Alliance](#)
- [Fats, Oils, and Grease: What We Know After](#)

### Local Municipal Websites:

- [Bloomington FOG Management Program](#)
- [Evansville FOG Prevention](#)
- [Franklin FOG Program](#)
- [Fort Wayne Utilities Grease Cooperative](#)
- [Tippecanoe County Food Waste and Cooking Oil Recycling](#)
- [Porter County Recycling](#)
- [West Lafayette Go Greener Commission](#)