



## FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS CONCERNING SPARTANBURG WATER GREASE CONTROL PROGRAM

[Why is grease a problem?](#)

[What is a grease trap/grease interceptor?](#)

[Do I need a grease trap?](#)

[Is the grease trap I have adequate?](#)

[I don't know if I have a grease trap?](#)

[What if I don't have a grease trap?](#)

[How can I become compliant?](#)

[What are the criteria for maintenance and securing my grease?](#)

[Who is responsible for inspecting my grease?](#)

[What about monitoring for PCBs?](#)

[What if PCBs are found in my grease trap?](#)

[What if my grease trap is found to be noncompliant by a Spartanburg Water inspector?](#)

[What is escalated enforcement?](#)

[What documentation must I maintain and for how long must it be retained?](#)

[Where can I get a copy of these requirements in full and any necessary forms?](#)

### **Why is grease a problem?**

Grease is a problem because it can cause blockages in sewer collection lines resulting in overflows of wastewater from the collection system. These overflows can potentially result in damage to property and/or environmental contamination of local bodies of water. Grease can adversely impact our wastewater collection system, equipment, and grease may also encumber wastewater treatment plants abilities to adequately treat the wastewater it receives. Although many believe pouring warm liquid grease down a drain is not harmful, once the grease cools, it hardens and may result in the blockages and overflows as describe above.

### **What is a grease trap/grease interceptor?**

The name grease trap or grease interceptor is often used interchangeably. These devices are utilized to allow for the separation of fats, oils and greases in wastewater discharges from food service establishments and/or other type grease and oil generating establishments. Such traps or interceptors may be the "outdoor" or in-ground type normally 1,000 gallons capacity or greater, or the "under-the-counter" package units normally referred to as the under-the-counter grease traps.

### **Do I need a grease trap?**

Any Food Service Establishment (FSE) that introduces grease or oil discharges from kitchens, dish washing and any wastewater that is associated with food preparation should have a grease trap. *This excludes residential occupancies that do not participate in the selling or preparation of food for commercial gain or business.*

## Is the grease trap I have adequate?

That depends on the discharge flow from the establishment and the amount of grease contained in the wastewater that discharges into the trap. The Universal Plumbing Code states that no grease trap should have a capacity less than 20 gallons per minute or more than 55 gallons per minute. Spartanburg Water requires all outside traps be at a minimum of 1000 gallon trap and no single trap should be greater than 2000 gallons (if larger is needed a series of traps may be accepted). Internal traps will need to be assessed based on the number of water generated fixtures it serves. The amount of grease in the wastewater can impact whether or not the establishment grease trap is able prevent grease from being discharged into the collection system. The FSE may need to implement Best Management Practices (BMP) in managing the handling of fats, oils and grease.

## I don't know if I have a grease trap?

The first step is can you identify any under-the-counter containers where sinks and drains tie into? Check the plumbing drawing of the facility if available, to see if a grease trap is identified on the drawing. If you are still unsure you may wish to contact a plumber to assist you in tracing the discharge lines from the facility to see if they lead to a grease trap. Typically outside traps have manhole covers (some only 1 but typically 2). Outside grease traps are typically close to the kitchen section of the facility.

## What if I don't have grease trap?

If your FSE discharges fats, oils and greases and does not have a grease trap eventually maintenance problems will occur with clogged sewer lines in the facility or backup situations in the wastewater collection lines in your service area. If your establishment is found to be the cause of such problems within the sewer service area based on the Spartanburg Water Grease Control Program and Spartanburg Water Sewer Use Rules and Regulations, your establishment may be charged for any cost recovery associated with the maintenance and repair for any issues associated with the grease discharges. To prevent this Spartanburg Water will require all FSEs to install some type of grease control device. This could be an in-ground outside trap or an approved under-the-counter unit(s).

## How can I become compliant?

If there is no grease trap at the FSE, Spartanburg Water requires that all grease laden waste streams be tied into grease control device. Spartanburg Water requires in-ground outside grease traps be no less than a 1000 gallon. A guide sheet for sizing the grease trap is located in the Grease Control Program for your assistance. The FSE may want to utilize an engineer to assist you with determining the proper size your FSE needs. Where it is determined by Spartanburg Water that the installation of an approved in-ground outside grease trap is infeasible or physically impossible to install, then an adequate and approved under-the-counter grease trap, may be required for use on individual fixtures, including sinks, dishwashers, and other potentially grease containing drains. The location of these units must be located as near as possible to the source of the wastewater. Under-the-counter grease traps require more frequent maintenance and record-keeping. Please obtain a copy of the Spartanburg Water Grease Control Program policy to understand the requirements for compliance with the Program.

## What are the criteria for maintenance and securing my grease trap?

For the in-ground outside grease traps, Spartanburg Water requires that traps be pumped once **25 % of the trap is full** with grease, solids, or a combination of both grease and solids and/or at a minimum pumped **once a quarter** or more if necessary. Quarters are considered to be January 1 through March 31; April 1 through June 30; July 1 through September 30; October 1 through December 31. Due to the nature of the FSE and the FSE's best management practices, more frequent pumping of the trap may be necessary or deemed necessary by the Spartanburg Water. FSE may request a variance from this requirement if the FSE is able to provide evidence that quarterly pumping is unnecessary for the FSE to comply with this program.

The entire contents of the grease trap must be removed, this includes all trapped fats, oils and greases, wastewater therein and solids. No waste, and/or wastewater from the pumping are to be reintroduced into the grease trap/grease interceptor. Owners/Users shall be responsible for ensuring that no waste, wastewater or solids pumped from the trap are reintroduced back in the trap. All grease traps must be secure and maintained by its owner/user in a manner that will prevent the introduction of any prohibited waste and any other unauthorized access. The owner/user will be responsible for any expenses related to securing the grease trap.

Spartanburg Water requires that all under-the-counter grease traps be cleaned on a **weekly basis** along with maintaining a log to document this cleaning. Weekly cleaning will assist in ensuring the under-the- trap grease trap is functioning correctly and limit odors from emanating from the trap. The District has a weekly under-the-counter grease trap form located within the Grease Control Program document found on our website. No waste removed from the under-the-counter trap should be disposed of via the sewer system.

FSEs with in-ground outside grease traps that require routine pumping should utilize Spartanburg Water's *Grease Trap Maintenance Log* while those FSE with under-the-counter grease traps should utilize the, Spartanburg Water's *Weekly Under-the-Counter Grease Trap Disposal Log*. Both these logs are located within Grease Control Program policy. All manifest of pumping events must be maintained. **All these records should be maintained and accessible for review by this office for a minimum of 1 year.**

### **Who is responsible for inspecting my grease trap?**

The ultimate responsibility for inspecting your grease trap is the owner/user of the establishment. Spartanburg Water personnel perform routine inspections on all known in-ground outside grease trap within its sewer service area; under-the-counter grease traps will be inspected semi-annually, however, these inspections do not alleviate the owner/user of the establishment from the responsibility of inspecting or ensuring the FSE's grease trap is operating and compliant.

### **What about monitoring for PCBs?**

Recently several Upstate communities (including Spartanburg) have been involved in removing PCB contamination from their wastewater treatment system as a result of PCBs being dumped in grease traps. As a result of these events Spartanburg Water will secure monitoring for all in-ground outside grease traps within its boundaries for PCBs on an annual basis. A copy of the analysis will be forwarded to the FSE once the results have been received by the District.

All FSEs with in-ground outside grease traps within Spartanburg County but outside of the District's boundaries will have to provide the District with laboratory reports and chain of custodies from a SCDHEC certified laboratory to document that their grease traps have no PCB contamination on an annual basis. The laboratory reports and all other required paperwork must be presented prior to discharging the grease loads at a District owned reclaimed water facility. Failure to provide this information may result in a denial of discharge.

### **What if PCBs are found in my grease trap?**

If your FSE is connected to the District's sewer system and PCBs are found in our analysis of the grease trap, the District will take immediate steps to discontinue any discharge from the FSE's grease trap unit the FSE can provide analytical results that demonstrate that the grease trap has PCB levels of non-detect and PCBs are no longer present.

If a grease trap lies outside of the District's boundaries and the grease trap is found to be PCB contaminated, the grease trap load will not be allowed to be discharged at any District owned reclaimed water facility.

## **What if my grease trap is found to be noncompliant by Spartanburg Water inspector?**

If the inspector finds that the grease trap is noncompliant, a notice of noncompliance will be left with the establishment. The notice will list the name of the establishment, the date and a deadline date for the noncompliant item(s) to be corrected. A typical notice requires that the owner/user list the name of the hauler, the date pumped, and where the grease pumped was hauled. This form should be completed and returned to Spartanburg Water. If the form is not returned, the establishment will be listed on a past due listing maintained by Spartanburg Water; the past due listing may result in Spartanburg Water performing additional inspections to check compliance. If the establishment is found not to have complied with notice of noncompliance, Spartanburg Water may escalate enforcement.

## **What is escalated enforcement?**

Escalated enforcement is taken against an FSE that does not comply with the requirements found in Spartanburg Water Grease Control Program and/or does not comply with the requirements listed of the notice of noncompliance left by the Spartanburg Water Inspector. Escalated enforcement can result in a civil penalty not exceeding \$2000.00 a day per of noncompliance. A civil penalty may be issued by Spartanburg Water for failure to comply and this failure shall be documented along with the assessed penalty with a deadline for payment unless otherwise documented. The typical enforcement actions can be found in the Spartanburg Water Grease Control Program

Other methods of escalated enforcement can be found within the Spartanburg Water's Grease Control Program and Spartanburg Sanitary Sewer District's Enforcement Response Guide document.

## **What documentation must I maintain and for how long must it be maintained?**

FSE owners/users must utilize and maintain Grease Trap Maintenance Log/Weekly Under-the-Counter Grease Trap Disposal Log to document the removal of grease trap contents for **no less than 1 year retention time and available for review by Spartanburg Water**. The record keeping requirements should be maintained and be accessible at the FSE for inspection by Spartanburg Water personnel when requested.

## **Where can I get a copy of these requirements in full and any necessary forms?**

The Grease Control Program Policy along with the necessary information and documents required for compliance can be located on the Spartanburg Water website by clicking [here](#). This document also contains Best Management Practices that can be incorporated by your FSE to assist you with compliance with the policy requirements.