

# HOW **FOG** CAN CAUSE WASTEWATER OVERFLOWS

Waste fat, oil and grease (FOG) are often produced in preparing food and in washing or other cleaning of cooking utensils, pots, pans, plates, bowls, etc.

Inside a plumbing system or a public sewer, FOG harden to a plaster-like consistency.

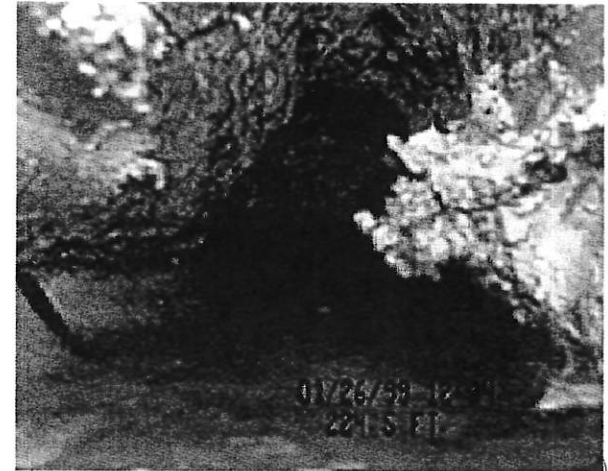
FOG may accumulate at various locations including those where tree roots have grown into a sewer.

When FOG accumulates in a sewer, it blocks the flow of wastewater. A combination of roots and

grease is especially likely to block the wastewater flow in a sewer.

When there is a blockage, wastewater will spill out of a manhole into the natural environment, a street or public or private property; or the wastewater may back up in a house or other building and overflow from a toilet.

We clean about one-third of our sewers annually, but it is not possible to remove all FOG accumulations before they can cause overflows. We have more than 335 miles of sewers.



*Above: Fat, oil and grease are beginning to accumulate in a sewer and restrict the flow of wastewater. This picture was taken with a videocamera we use to inspect our sanitary sewer system.*

## A spatula and paper towels...



...low cost, highly effective  
tools for proper **FOG** disposal.

## KEEPING FOG OUT OF DRAINS AND SEWERS

- ◆ Prevent fat, oil and grease from going down the drain during food preparation and while washing dishes.
- ◆ Scraping or wiping fat, oil and grease off pots, pans, plates, bowls, etc. is a simple but effective way to keep FOG from going down the drain when you wash utensils, plates, pots, pans, etc. to cook or prepare food.
- ◆ Residents can put small amounts (1 quart or less) of fat and solidified grease in a sealed container for disposal with other refuse.
- ◆ Used cooking oil should be recycled at the Orange County's Household Hazardous Waste program at 1514 Eubanks Road (on the north side of Chapel Hill).  
  
Please call 919-968-2788, send an e-mail to [recycling@orangecountync.gov](mailto:recycling@orangecountync.gov) or visit <http://www.co.orange.nc.us/recycling/hhw>.asp for more information.
- ◆ Businesses must have a grease trap which keeps FOG from going into the sewer system and which is regularly cleaned out by a company that recycles FOGs.