

Proper Disposal of Fat, Oil and Grease (FOG) Helps Prevent Wastewater Overflows

Please dispose of residential fat and grease with refuse taken to the landfill, and recycle used cooking oil through **Orange County's Household Hazardous Waste program** at 1514 Eubanks Road on the north side of Chapel Hill.

If **FOG** goes down a plumbing drain at a home or business, the **FOG** can cause a back-up with resulting inconvenience and potential costs to the owner.

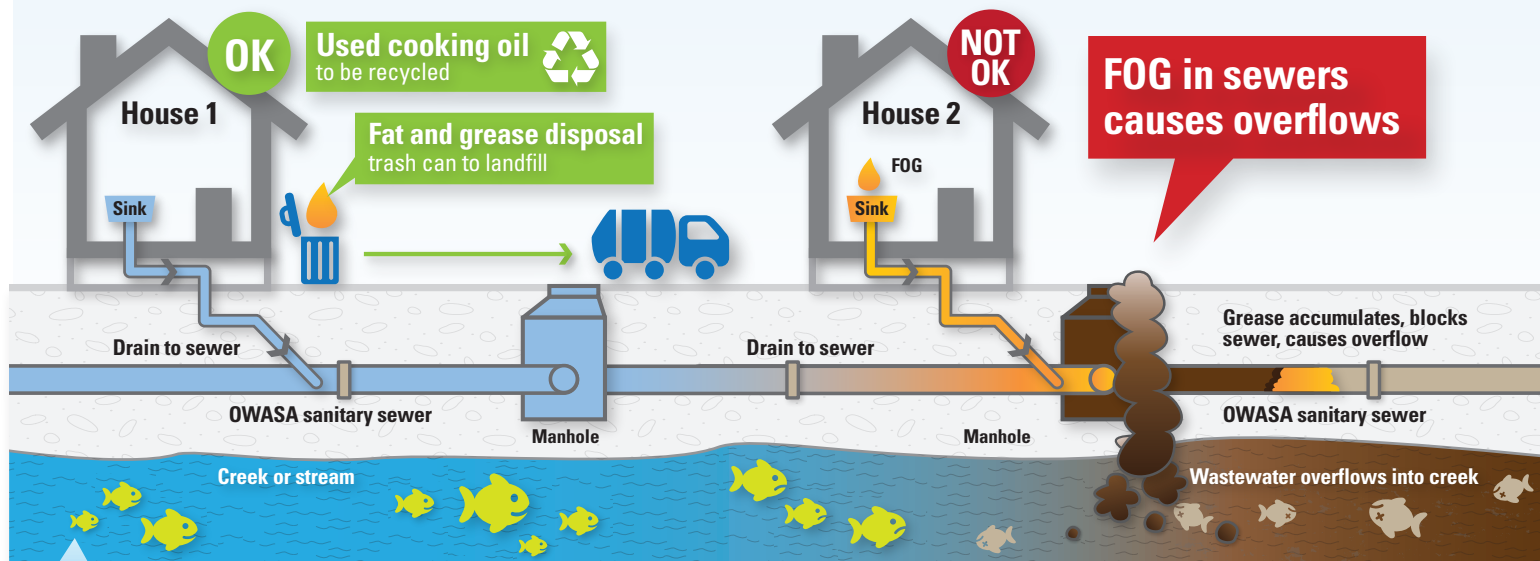
If the **FOG** reaches an OWASA public sewer, the **FOG** can accumulate, harden and block the sewer, resulting in a

wastewater overflow from a manhole upstream of the blockage. These overflows can be harmful to the environment if they reach streams or ponds.

Blockages caused by **FOG** are a common cause of wastewater overflows in our community and in North Carolina.

Restaurants and other businesses which produce waste **FOG** are required to have and to periodically clean grease traps to help minimize the potential for back-ups, blockages and overflows.

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To help minimize the chance of wastewater overflows, we clean about 110 miles or one-third of our sewers and allocate about 1,400 person-hours for this task each year.

Due to the understanding and support of our customers (Thank you!) and several kinds of work by employees, wastewater overflows typically equal a fraction of 1% of the over 3 billion gallons of wastewater we manage each year.

Also in this issue:

- Chlorine Taste and Odor in Water in March/early April
- Open Houses for Our 40th Anniversary
- Backflow Prevention
- Care to Share

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CONTACT US

Orange Water and Sewer Authority
400 Jones Ferry Road, Carrboro, NC 27510

Customer Service phone and e-mail:
919.537.4343 • customerinquiries@owasa.org

Office Hours: 8 AM to 5 PM, Monday-Friday

Emergencies and Main Office phone:
919.968.4421 • www.owasa.org • info@owasa.org

Español

Este boletín informativo contiene información sobre los servicios de agua y alcantarillado de **OWASA**. Para obtener una traducción, por favor llame al **919.537.4221** o mande un correo electrónico a: info@owasa.org. ¡Muchas gracias!

Our Water may have a Chlorine Taste and Odor in March and Early April due to our Annual Disinfection Change



In March, we will use chlorine instead of chloramines to disinfect our drinking water.

Chloramines are a compound of chlorine and ammonia which OWASA has used since 2002 for disinfection in months other than March. Disinfection with chloramines has improved the quality of our drinking water and reduced chlorine taste and odor. Because chlorine is a slightly stronger disinfectant, we use chlorine one month per year to ensure a high level of disinfection in the water system in accordance with recommendations from the **NC Department of Environmental Quality**.

Discoloration in our water and what to do

To more quickly circulate water with chlorine throughout our system, we will release water from fire hydrants in some areas. This “flushing” may cause discoloration in our water. This discoloration consists primarily of harmless sediment and air, which do not affect the safety of the water.

If your water is discolored, please run cold water through a spigot or faucet for 5 to 10 minutes. In the unlikely event this does not clear up the water, **please call us at 919.968.4421**.

To remove or neutralize chlorine in our water, you can:

- Add a few lemon slices to a pitcher of water. The lemon has ascorbic acid, which neutralizes the chlorine.
- Let water sit for a day or so. (We suggest keeping the water in an open container in a refrigerator.)
- Boil the water for one minute to evaporate the chlorine.
- Filter the water with activated carbon. Water pitchers with activated carbon filters are sold locally.

After neutralizing chlorine, please refrigerate the water to help prevent bacteria from growing in the water.

Backflow Prevention Helps Protect the Public Health

“Backflow” is the flow of water from a private plumbing system back into OWASA’s public water system. Backflow may occur under conditions such as a water pipe break which significantly lowers water pressure in the OWASA system. If water from a private system is contaminated, the backflow of water into the OWASA system would affect the public water supply.

Therefore, OWASA and other water utilities across North Carolina and the U.S. have requirements that some customers install devices to prevent backflow. For example, backflow prevention requirements apply to most businesses and to residential and other customers with irrigation systems or swimming pools. The costs for backflow preventers including annual inspections are paid by the property owner or the OWASA customer using the property.

However, residences with normal water uses and no special water-using equipment are not required to install backflow preventers (unless there is a pool or irrigation system).

If you believe that a backflow prevention device may be needed where you receive OWASA service, please contact us. Information including our recently revised ordinance is also available on our website by searching for backflow prevention.



Open Houses on April 8th and 22nd to Celebrate our 40th Anniversary of Serving the Community

To thank our customers for supporting our services since February 1977, we will hold an **Open House** on **Saturday, April 8th** at the **Cane Creek Reservoir** and on **Saturday, April 22nd** in our facilities at **400 Jones Ferry Road, Carrboro**.

We will provide more information before the Open Houses. Please mark the dates on your calendar!

Lend a Helping Hand with Care to Share

We invite you to help your neighbor by donating to the **Care to Share Customer Assistance Program** because:

- Clean drinking water and wastewater are essential to the health of our community.
- Short-term bill assistance can help those in need avoid service cutoffs and a reconnection fee.
- Care to Share is an easy way to make a big difference for some of our neighbors.

The Inter-Faith Council for Social Service (IFC) administers Care to Share funds to help families in need continue or start OWASA service.

To get more information or to sign up as a donor, please click on **Care to Share** at **owasa.org**. You can choose any amount to contribute with your monthly bill payments.

