

# Guide to Grease Traps and Interceptors

## What is a Grease Trap or Interceptor ?

A grease trap is a concrete or steel 'box' that allows floatable oils and greases from food sources to be separated or 'trapped' from the kitchen wastewater prior to discharge. This 'box' is so constructed with baffles and compartments that the grease floats to the top and is retained while the water it is found in is allowed to flow out of the 'box' and into the sanitary sewer system. The major difference in a trap and an interceptor is its size. However, they both function essentially the same. A grease trap is smaller and usually found inside and under or near a sink, while an interceptor is a multi-compartment infloor or outside inground unit.

## Are there regulations governing them ?

Yes. Glendale *City Code* Section 33-238 lists the grease trap / interceptor installation and maintenance requirements for eating establishments within the City of Glendale. Further information can be found in Glendale's *Design Guidelines For Site Development and Infrastructure Construction*, Section 7.2. Detailed schematics can be found in this document under *Standard Details G-720 and G-725*. The state of Arizona has adopted the *1994 Uniform Plumbing Code* that includes grease trap and interceptor requirements detailed in Chapter 10.

## Glendale City Code Requirements

- Grease and oil interceptors shall be provided when necessary for the proper handling of liquid waste containing grease or oil
- They shall be of an approved type and capacity
- They shall be located as to be readily and easily accessible for cleaning and inspection
- They shall be constructed of impervious materials capable of withstanding abrupt and extreme changes in temperature
- They shall be watertight and equipped with easily removable lids
- They shall be maintained by the owner at his or her expense in continuously efficient operation at all times
- All traps and interceptors shall be pumped out or cleaned out completely every 180 days or as required by the City
- Use of enzymes, chemicals, or bacteria as substitute for maintenance is prohibited
- Addition of emulsifiers into grease removal devices is strictly prohibited
- They shall be repaired as necessary to replace worn, lost or broken fixtures such as elbows and down-turn pipes
- Written records of all cleaning, repair, and maintenance shall be kept on site for at least 3 years
- Records shall be made available to City personnel upon request

## Maintenance Guidance

- It is recommended that grease traps be cleaned once per month
- Interceptors should be on a regular maintenance schedule of pumping and cleaning to ensure efficient operations
- An interceptor should be pumped once the final compartment starts to accumulate any grease or sludge
- Interceptors shall be pumped dry and completely cleaned of all wastewater, fats, oils, grease, sand and sludge.
- Interceptors should be washed and scraped to remove hard grease each time it is pumped
- Following pumping and cleaning, all compartments shall be refilled with clean water
- Waste haulers or pumpers shall never be allowed to decant wastewater from the truck back into an interceptor
- It is advisable to have a company representative present to confirm proper pumping
- Missing or broken parts should be replaced any time an interceptor is found to be defective

## Grease Disposal

- Grease wastes are not allowed to be discharged to the sanitary sewer
- Grease waste should be properly disposed of by recycling or at a disposal site
- All traps and interceptors shall be pumped out or cleaned out completely every 180 days or as required by the City
- Grease should never be disposed of in a dumpster
- Pumping of interceptor decant water back into an interceptor is prohibited

## Poorly Functioning Traps or Interceptors Could Be Due To

- Infrequent Cleaning
- Improper Cleaning
- Damage to baffles
- Missing elbows or downturn pipes
- Improper venting
- Lack of venting
- Flow control device malfunction
- Improper installation
- Under sized trap or interceptor
- Discharge from restroom illegally tied into system
- Poorly graded plumbing
- Wastewater temperature too high to allow grease to solidify
- Decomposing solids causing odor problems
- Line blockage or restriction due to grease build up in sewer system
- Too many fixtures tied into interceptor
- Foreign objects in trap or interceptor