



FATS, OILS AND GREASE CHARGE

Q: Why is this fee being assessed?

A: As part of the City of Indianapolis' ongoing efforts to maintain and improve public infrastructure as well as protect the environment and public health, the City-County Council has approved a monthly Fats, Oil and Grease (FOG) charge. The City-County Council approved this charge on April 13, 2009, as part of the sanitary sewer rate increase ordinance (Section 671-102 of the Indianapolis City Code). Revenue from this charge will help support the cost of sewer treatment, operational and maintenance costs, and investigation associated with the impact of FOG in the Indianapolis sanitary sewer system.

Q: What is FOG?

A: FOG stands for Fats, Oil and Grease, which are found in food scraps, meat fats, lard, oil, margarine, butter, baking goods, sauces and dairy products.

Q: Why is FOG a problem in our sewers?

A: Food and cooking establishments are a significant source of FOG in the city's sewers. When washed down sinks and drains, FOG can build up over time and eventually create clogs. Clogged sewers can cause backups and raw sewage overflows, which create unhealthy and undesirable living conditions and can release untreated sewage into local rivers and streams. This can expose the city to costly environmental penalties from the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency.

Q: Why should FOG matter to my business?

A: Sewer backups create health hazards and can attract insects and vermin. They can result in property damage and health code violations. They can also lead to expensive plumbing repairs.

However, you should be aware that FOG can be a valuable resource. Businesses can recycle their FOG rather than dumping it down the drain by selling their FOG to rendering companies for use in soaps, fertilizers or animal feeds.

Q: What is the FOG charge?

A: The FOG charge is a monthly fee approved by the City-County Council as part of the 2009-2013 sanitary sewer rate increase ordinance. Revenue from this charge will help support the cost of sewer treatment, operational and maintenance costs, and investigation associated with the impact of FOG in the Indianapolis sanitary sewer system

Q: How much is the FOG charge?

A: The FOG charge will be a monthly fee of \$15 included as a separate line item on the water/sewer bill. The sewer bill comes to each ratepayer as a part of their water bill from Indianapolis Water. The ratepayer will be charged \$15 per month for each individual food establishment license they hold. The charge will increase annually by \$5 each January through 2013 and will continue at this rate unless changed by the City-County Council in the future.

<u>Effective Date</u>	<u>Monthly Charge per License</u>
January 1, 2010	\$15
January 1, 2011	\$20
January 1, 2012	\$25
January 1, 2013	\$30

Q: Who will be billed?

A: Indianapolis Sanitary Sewer District customers that are by ordinance required to be licensed as a food/cooking establishment are subject to a monthly charge for FOG in accordance with Section 671-102 of the Indianapolis City Code. Food establishments are required to be licensed by the Marion County Health Department or the Indiana State Department of Health. Due to the considerable amounts of FOG used for food preparation, these establishments are a significant source of FOG in city sewers.

Q: How and when will I be billed?

A: This charge will be included as a separate line item on your monthly sewer bill from Indianapolis Water. If you do not have an individual water meter or you are a tenant, the entity that receives your sewer bill or your landlord may assess you for this charge at its discretion.



Q: My business is not a traditional food establishment. Why will I be billed?

A: Some additional entities, such as hospitals, long-term care facilities, schools, universities and other nontraditional food establishments, also will be subject to this charge. These facilities are licensed by the Marion County Health Department or the Indiana State Department of Health to serve food from their on-site kitchens. (Reference: the Indiana Code 16-22-8; the Indiana Administrative Code (IAC) 410 IAC 16-42-1-6; 410 IAC 7-24-79; 410 IAC 7-24-107)

Q: I have a grease interceptor so I am not contributing to the problem. Why will I be subject to this charge?

A: All licensed restaurants and other food establishments are required to install a grease interceptor (commonly known as a grease trap) in the waste line leading from plumbing fixtures or from any equipment where grease may be introduced to the sewer system. (Reference: Section 671-4(g) of the Indianapolis City Code). As part of the 2009-2013 sanitary sewer rate increase, Section 671-102 states, "Sanitary District customers that are by Ordinance required to be licensed as a food/cooking establishment shall be subject to a monthly charge for 'Fats, Oil & Grease' ('FOG')." For the city to ensure that each individual grease interceptor is working properly, samples would need to be collected and tested for FOG. The cost to collect a water sample and test for FOG exceeds the \$15 monthly charge. Collection and analysis of these samples is a more expensive approach for ratepayers. The FOG charge is a less costly way for you and your business to help in providing cleaner water and safer sanitary sewers for our community.

Q: My small business contributes less FOG to the sewer system than others. Why will we pay the same amount?

A: Without consistent testing of all licensed food establishments, the city is unable to determine if one business contributes more FOG to the system than another does. To prevent costly water sampling and testing each month, the city has decided to distribute one low-cost fee equally among all licensed food establishments.

Q: What are other cities doing about FOG?

A: Cities across the country are implementing programs to educate residents and businesses about the effects of FOG in sewer systems. Educational programs already are established in cities such as Louisville, Ky, Cincinnati and Columbus, Ohio, and Washington, D.C. Many cities also require food establishments to maintain wastewater discharge permits or pay other fees to help offset the cost of FOG-related sewer maintenance.

Q: Why is this charge being implemented now?

A: This charge is being implemented as part of the city's ongoing efforts to maintain and improve public infrastructure as well as protect public health and the environment. Preventive measures and continual maintenance will help the city and local businesses avoid costly fines and keep Indianapolis a world-class city with cleaner streams and healthier neighborhoods.

Q: Where can I obtain additional information about fats, oil and grease?

A: For more information about FOG, how it can affect your business and how you can help keep it from polluting the environment, visit the Clean Stream Team Web site at www.indy.gov/FatsOilsGrease. A poster, fact sheet and video on FOG best management practices are also available on this Web site or call 317-327-8720 to obtain copies of these materials for your business.

BEST MANAGEMENT PRACTICES TO REDUCE FOG IN OUR SEWERS

- Monitor outside grease traps regularly and clean them when FOG reaches 25 percent of the grease trap depth.
- Monitor inside grease traps monthly and clean them at least once every three months.
- Use an established recycling company to dispose of waste cooking oil (for example, deep fryer oil). NEVER put oil down the drain!
- "Dry wipe" pots, pans and dishware before washing.
- Use composting or recycling to dispose of food wastes instead of garbage disposals.
- Use towels and other absorbent materials to pick up spills before mopping the floor.
- Ensure that all grease interceptors are operating properly by having a manager or supervisor confirm that all cleaning and maintenance activities are performed.
- Keep a log of maintenance activities to help demonstrate code compliance (Chapter 671) and all other best management practices.