

PRESS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE November 21, 2012

Holiday Fats and Oils Clog Sewer Drains Avoid Clogged Drains with Proper Fat, Oil and Grease Disposal

(Arcata, CA) - The City of Arcata Environmental Services Department encourages residents to properly dispose of cooking grease during the holiday season and all year long.

Many people celebrate the holiday season by preparing traditional holiday feasts including turkey, ham, gravy, stuffing and, let's not forget, desserts. As delicious as these foods may be, they are prepared with cooking oil, grease, butter and rendered fat—all of which can cause sewer back-ups if they enter the sanitary sewer system.

Fats, oils and grease (FOG) used for cooking or created as a result of cooking can wreak havoc on drains and the waste water system if not disposed of properly. Fats, oils and grease should never be poured down a sink drain or toilet. If this does occur, it increases chances for clogged drains resulting in costly plumbing problems for residents or sanitary sewer overflows.

Sanitary sewer overflows are a public health concern and cause environmental problems.

"City crews will respond to correct sanitary sewer overflows," says Mark André, Director of the City of Arcata's Environmental Services Department, "But prevention is always the best course of action, and proper disposal of fats, oils and grease will avoid many plumbing and sewer problems."

Cooled and solidified cooking grease or oil should be placed in a sealed container, stored in the freezer until it has hardened and then put in a solid waste garbage bin. People can also pour fats and oils into cat litter until it is absorbed and then dispose of the litter in the trash. Large amounts of fats and grease can be taken to the Humboldt Waste Management Authority's Household Hazardous Waste collection facility. Here are other tips to avoid FOG-related clogged sewer drains:

- Avoid pouring cooking grease down the sink drain or toilet;
- Wipe greasy dishes and pots with a paper towel or napkin to absorb cooking oil before washing;
- Scrape vegetable scraps from dishes for backyard compost and scrape greasy food residue into the garbage prior to washing;
- Avoid placing food that contains fats, oil and grease into the garbage disposal.

To report sanitary sewer overflows and for more information regarding fat, oil and grease disposal and proper disposal of Household Hazardous Wastes, please call (707) 822-8184.

###