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Don't Be a Turkey this Holiday Season
Tips for safely disposing of cooking fats, oil and grease

(Hampton Roads, Va., Nov. 21, 2019) – Don't be a turkey with your holiday kitchen clean up this season. Improper disposal of fats, oils and grease (FOG) rendered from turkey roasting and frying is a common mistake, and askHRgreen.org encourages at-home chefs to collect and dispose of these drain-clogging substances properly.



“Don't ever dispose of cooking oils and grease down the drain or garbage disposal,” said Rebekah Eastep, an askHRgreen.org team leader. “These substances can congeal and block pipes, clogging sanitary sewer systems across Hampton Roads—including yours.”

Who wants that problem at a holiday gathering? Uh; nobody! Here's a quick rundown of ways to keep you're your holidays FOG-free during this season and all year long:

- **Reuse or recycle turkey frying oil** – Fried turkey is a treat, but what is the trick to disposing of all that leftover oil? Run it through a strainer into its original container, and you can use it again for future frying for up to six months or six hours of frying time. Or, freeze the container and throw the hardened oil away on trash day. Large amounts of oil also can be recycled at your community's transfer or recycling center. Check out our [turkey frying fact sheet](#) for more tips. For a list of local fryer oil recycling locations visit www.askhrgreen.org/fryer-oil-recycling-locations/.
- **Can standing grease.** The turkey frying disposal method also applies to standing grease leftover from cooking bacon, sausage and other fried foods. Pour the left-over cooking oil in a heat-safe can, pop it in the freezer to harden and toss the can out with

the trash.

- **Keep grease out of the yard.** It's just as bad to dump these oily substances in your yard. When it rains, the oily residue runs off into the storm drain, reaching local waterways without treatment.
- **Trash oily substances.** Avoid depositing oil-based substances such as lard, shortening, butter, margarine, dairy products, batter and icing, salad dressings and sauces into the drain, where they can congeal and clog the pipes. Dump these leftovers in the garbage instead.
- **Scrap leftover foods.** Throw food scraps in the trash or compost them. Use a napkin or paper towel to wipe away residue from serving dishes and plates. Then rinse these items over a sink strainer to catch and dispose of any remaining food particles.

Finally, a word of caution about garbage disposals: If you think yours will safely dispose of food scraps; think again.

“These appliances do break food scraps down into smaller pieces, but they just end up clinging to the pipe walls, said Eastep. “Over time, the buildup increases, blocks the flow of wastewater and leads to backups into homes, onto streets, down storm drains and into local waterways. That’s not only a nuisance; but an environmental concern as well.”

For more tips on keeping a clean, green kitchen, visit www.askHRgreen.org.

About askHRgreen.org

askHRgreen.org is your go-to resource for all things green in Hampton Roads – from recycling tips and pointers for keeping local waterways clean to water-saving ideas and simple steps to make local living easy on the environment. Launched in 2011, the region-wide public awareness and education campaign is administered through the Hampton Roads Planning District Commission and powered by the following members: The cities of Chesapeake, Franklin, Hampton, Newport News, Norfolk, Poquoson, Portsmouth, Suffolk, Virginia Beach, and Williamsburg; the counties of Gloucester, Isle of Wight, James City, Southampton, Surry and York; the town of Smithfield; and HRSD. Like askHRgreen.org on [Facebook](#), follow on [Twitter](#) and [Instagram](#), tune in to [YouTube](#) and catch the “Let’s Talk Green” [blog](#), written by a team of local experts.