

How to Keep Your Turkey Day Flowing Smoothly

(Hampton Roads, Va., Nov. 14, 2023) – A whole lotta' cooking will be going on soon now that the holidays are near. While it is good for the soul to gather with friends and family over a festive meal, the leftover standing grease and oily food scraps can wreak havoc if disposed of improperly.



“When fats, oils and grease (FOG) are poured or scraped into the kitchen drain, these substances adhere to the sides of the pipes, restricting water flow,” said Rebekah Eastep, with askHRgreen.org public awareness and education initiative. “This can lead to sewage backups in your home or a sanitary sewer overflow in the street.”

Once in the sewers, FOG can meet objects that should not have been flushed down toilets, such as paper towels, cleaning wipes and facial tissues, to form huge masses or “fat bergs.”

Talk about putting a pall on the party! To keep the season running smoothly, Eastep offers these suggestions for keeping pipes and plumbing humming:

- For standing grease, pour it into an empty can, let it harden in the freezer and then toss the can in the trash.
- For grease from cooked foods such as bacon or hamburger, allow it to cool in the pan, then use a paper towel to swipe and toss it in the trash.
- For dishes, scrape any leftovers into the trash before washing.
- To dispose of leftover turkey frying oil, [contact your locality](#) for proper disposal.
- Restaurant owners should adhere to the same guidelines as well. In addition, they should maintain and inspect grease control devices, dispose of fryer grease correctly and keep oil storage containers securely covered.
- Know what not to flush and avoid backed-up toilets by only placing toilet paper, water and waste created by the human body down the toilet.

Keep it FOG-free year round

Sewer overflows and backups are not only an inconvenience for Hampton Roads residents, but they also impact the environment by contaminating local waterways and harming wildlife and aquatic species.

This is a key concern for askHRgreen.org, a public awareness and education initiative backed by 17 Hampton Roads municipalities and HRSD.

“Keeping your drains FOG-free goes beyond the holiday season,” Eastep said. “We should follow these practices year-round. It is really everybody’s responsibility to do the right thing.”

For more tips on keeping Hampton Roads clean and green, visit askHRgreen.org.

Visual assets to accompany this release area available [at this link](#).

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.

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