

“More than 80% of sanitary sewer overflows in the City of Lancaster are the result of pipe blockages from FOG accumulation,” said Mayor R. Rex Parris. “Allowing FOG to flow into our sewer system is not only a violation of sewer use and environmental regulations; it also has a serious negative impact on neighboring homes and businesses. Before you discharge FOG, please consider the consequences: you may cause raw sewage to back up into your home or business and in those surrounding you.”

In July 2009, the Lancaster City Council adopted an ordinance to combat this abuse of the sewer system and protect residents from such overflows. The ordinance, which took effect July 1, 2009, takes a proactive approach to controlling FOG-related blockages by overseeing and controlling its discharge to the City’s sanitary sewer system, as well as requiring that commercial food service establishments (FSEs) obtain a FOG Wastewater Discharge Permit in order to discharge to the sewer system under controlled conditions. The ordinance also requires the use of grease interceptors or other methods such as Kitchen Best Management Practices to avoid or reduce the amount of FOG entering the sewers.

Currently, approximately 300 FSEs are served by the City’s sanitary sewer system. Other substantial sources of FOG may include commercial kitchens, caterers, and institutional kitchens.

In an effort to prevent the problems associated with FOG, the City regularly cleans approximately 21 miles of sewer lines that have historically been problem areas. The City also adds or removes sewer lines to its preventive maintenance program following blockages or overflows, as well as in response to observations of grease or other debris during Closed-Circuit Television (CCTV) inspections.

“We strongly urge all business owners and citizens of Lancaster not to discharge FOG into the sanitary sewer system,” added Parris. “Each of us is a part of our community, and each of us shares the responsibility of environmental stewardship.”