

Trade Waste Fact Sheet

Trade Waste & the Food Industry

Housekeeping Tips

Trade waste from food businesses often contains solids, oils and grease that can cause blockages, overload pre-treatment systems, and impact Townsville City Council's sewerage network.

Highly acidic or caustic waste can also damage infrastructure, generate toxic gases, disrupt wastewater treatment processes, and create safety risks for workers.

Under Council's Trade Waste Management Plan, trade waste customers must manage their wastewater to ensure:

- pH is between 6 and 9
- solids are less than 13mm
- oils and grease are below 200 mg/L
- suspended solids are below 1000 mg/L.

Your Trade Waste Approval requires grease arrestors to be serviced at the approved frequency to ensure they continue operating effectively.

Implementing good housekeeping practices can improve trade waste quality, reduce the burden on your grease arrestor, minimise blockages and overflows, reduce water consumption, and help you meet the conditions of your Trade Waste Approval.

The contents of all soak tanks must not be discharged to Council's sewerage system. All soak tank waste is to be collected and disposed of by a registered liquid waste disposal provider and service receipts provided to Council.

Benefits of Good Housekeeping

Good housekeeping practices can help:

- Improve trade waste quality
- Reduce grease arrestor maintenance costs
- Prevent blockages and overflows
- Lower water consumption and trade waste charges
- Extend the life of trade waste infrastructure
- Assist your business in meeting Trade Waste Approval conditions

Need More Information?

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Cleaner Production Hierarchy

Prevent Waste at the Source The most effective way to manage trade waste is to prevent contaminants from entering drains and sewers.	• Scrape food scraps into bins before washing dishes. • Dry wipe plates, cookware and surfaces to remove oils, grease, sauces and food residues. • Sweep floors before hosing or washing down. • Install and maintain dry basket arrestors and sink strainers. • Provide sufficient bins near food preparation areas. • Relocate food processing activities away from drains where possible. • Avoid washing coffee grounds, tea leaves, sugars, gravies and food scraps into sinks. • Avoid garbage disposal units, which are not permitted in commercial kitchens. • Educate staff on correct waste disposal practices.
Reduce Water Use Reducing water consumption lowers both water use and trade waste disposal costs.	• Use dry-cleaning methods wherever possible. • Pre-rinse plates and cutlery using cool water. • Avoid using running taps unnecessarily. • Operate dishwashers only when fully loaded and use economy cycles where available. • Install water-efficient taps, trigger nozzles, flow restrictors or leg-operated taps. • Consider waterless wok systems where suitable. • Repair leaking taps promptly. • Monitor trade waste meter readings regularly. • Train staff in water-saving practices.
Reduce Chemical and Heat Impacts Excess chemicals and hot wastewater can reduce the effectiveness of grease arrestors and impact the sewer network.	• Avoid extremely high wastewater temperatures. • Use only the amount of detergent recommended by the manufacturer. • Choose biodegradable cleaning products where possible. • Avoid using bleach, caustic soda or other harsh chemicals.
Reuse and Recycle Waste Recovering waste materials helps keep contaminants out of the sewer system.	• Never pour cooking oil, fats or grease into sinks, floor wastes or drains. • Store used cooking oil in suitable containers or drums. • Arrange collection of used cooking oil through approved recycling contractors. • Implement a solid waste management plan. • Recognise and encourage staff who follow best-practice waste management. • Never discharge decarbonising soak tank contents to sewer drains.
Maintain Your Grease Arrestor A properly sized, maintained and serviced grease arrestor is essential for effective trade waste management.	• Retain a registered contractor to service your grease arrestor. • Service your grease arrestor at the frequency specified in your Trade Waste Approval. • Witness pump-outs where possible to ensure the arrestor is completely emptied and cleaned, including removal of grease and fat build-up on internal walls. • Regular cleaning helps: - Reduce contaminant concentrations - Minimise odours - Prevent clogging - Extend the life of the grease arrestor - Reduce corrosion caused by decomposing food waste. • After pump-out, consider partially refilling the grease arrestor by running cold water into a sink for approximately 20 minutes. This can help reduce odours and provide initial dilution. For decarbonising soak tanks, engage a registered contractor to remove and dispose of spent contents appropriately.