TURKEY FRYING FACTS

Frying a Turkey for the Holidays?

Don't let the "Grease Grinch" spoil your holiday fun. Use this guide to keep your holidays safe, healthy, and happy when deep-frying a turkey. You'll find tips for cooking your turkey, along with safety information to keep you, your family and pets burn-free. And, avoid calling the plumber by keeping oil and grease out of your drains.

Avoid Calling the Plumber

It may seem like an easy solution to a messy problem, but pouring fryer oil down the drain will just lead to a nastier problem. Oil and grease rinsed down the plumbing system can congeal and block pipes, causing sewer back-ups. Proper disposal of your cooking oil and other greases may save your home from a clogged drain–and a holiday visit from the plumber.

Clogs can also occur outside your home in the public sewage system, resulting in raw sewage overflowing a manhole in the street or a cleanout on your property. As sewage flows down the street, it enters the storm drain system, where it is then carried straight into our local waterways without any treatment. Polluted storm water and sanitary sewer overflow runoff can lead to costly clean up and severe fines from State and Federal regulatory agencies.

Just like melted butter, cooking grease eventually solidifies in the sewer system. The above picture is a Hampton Roads sewer pipe blocked by grease.

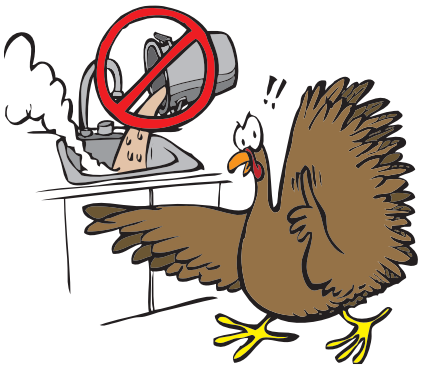
Only Rain in Storm Drains

In Hampton Roads, we say, "Only rain in storm drains!" Storm drains connect directly to the nearest body of water–be it a neighborhood creek, or the Chesapeake Bay. Water flows through the storm drains without treatment. Pouring oil down a storm drain is the same as pouring it directly into a lake.

What Do I Do with the Oil?

Disposing of gallons of fryer oil can seem overwhelming. What do you do with it all? Pouring it down the kitchen sink or the storm drain is simply asking for a clogged pipe. Instead, choose one of the following options. For best results, use a container with a tight-fitting lid:

- Store the oil in the original container for reuse. Strain out any particles and freeze. Oil can be kept for up to six months and reused for up to six hours of fry time.
- Freeze it and then throw the hardened oil away on trash day.
- Mix it with unscented kitty litter, sawdust, or sand to solidify the oil. Dispose of it in the trash. Avoid scented or disinfectant types of kitty litter as they can react with the oil and cause a fire.
- Recycle it at your community's transfer or recycling center. A list of centers is available at **www.FatFreeDrains.com**



Pouring used oil down the drain could result in an unpleasant call to the plumber. Keep your holidays merry by storing grease for another use, recycling it, or putting it in the trash.

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TRASH THE FAT

Frying the Turkey

- Once the oil has come to temperature (near 375° F), place the thawed turkey in the basket and slowly lower into the pot. Oil burns at high temperatures, so keep the temperature at 375° F or less.
- Whole turkeys require approximately 3 minutes per pound to cook. Remove turkey and check internal temperature with a meat thermometer. The temperature should reach 170° F in the breast and 180° F in the thigh.
- Turkey parts, such as breasts, wings and thighs, require approximately 4-5 minutes per pound.

Safety Tips

- Make sure the turkey is completely thawed before frying. Place the turkey fryer well away from your home, trees, or wooden structures like a deck. A cooking fire could quickly spread to your entire home.
- Never leave the hot oil unattended and don't allow children or pets near the cooking area.
- Allow the oil to cool completely before disposing or storing.
- Immediately wash hands, utensils, equipment and surfaces that have come in contact with raw turkey.
- Turkey should be consumed immediately and leftovers stored in the refrigerator within two hours of cooking.

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Where Can I Recycle My Used Cooking Oil?

All Hampton Roads municipalities accept solidified household grease in the regular trash pick-up. Citizens may also dispose of cooking oil at their locality's Household Chemical Waste facility. For information on your locality's transfer or recycling center, visit **www.FatFreeDrains.com.**

What Happens to the Oil After I Recycle It?

A recycler or grease-renderer turns the oil into raw materials which are then used to make fuel, pet food, poultry seed, soap, cosmetics, perfumes, antifreeze, glues, cement, and inks.

More Drain-Saving Tips

Grease causes a majority of sanitary sewer blockages in Hampton Roads. Homeowners are responsible for maintaining the portion of the sanitary sewer pipe that runs from their homes to the main sewer lines. Since the homeowner lines are smaller, they clog more easily, so keep grease and food scraps out of your sink and toilet drains.

- Scrape food scraps, oil and grease from kitchen utensils and equipment into the trash before washing to help keep grease out of wash water.
- Use a paper towel to wipe up small amounts of cooking oil, such as meat drippings. Throw the paper towels in the trash.
- Never pour oil and grease down the drain, and avoid using hot water to wash the grease away.

The Hampton Roads Fats, Oils, and Grease (HR FOG) education committee provided this fact sheet through the Hampton Roads Planning District Commission (HRPDC). HR FOG is a group of representatives from Hampton Roads local governments and the Hampton Roads Sanitation District (HRSD) who work together to reduce sanitary sewer overflows through increased awareness of the proper disposal of fats, oils, and grease.