

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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KEEP SEWERS FAT-FREE THIS HOLIDAY SEASON
Baykeeper and East Bay Municipal Utility District urge residents
not to put cooking oil and grease down the sink.

The holidays are just around the corner, and many Bay Area residents are gearing up for special meals – with buttery foods, turkeys and homemade gravy. Food-focused holidays challenge not only waistlines but, surprisingly, local sewer lines. This year, Baykeeper and EBMUD urge residents to protect their homes and the Bay by keeping fats, oil and grease out of pipes and visiting one of the District’s free residential cooking oil and grease recycling locations.

Fats and grease washed down the drain can stick to the insides of home and street sewer lines. Over time, grease builds up until it blocks pipes and causes sewage to overflow into homes, streets and even local creeks. Large amounts of oil—like that used in turkey fryers—can be devastating to sewer lines.

“Sewage spills are a real threat to the health of the Bay and local creeks,” says Baykeeper Executive Director Deb Self. “We hope Bay Area residents will think twice before washing grease down the drain and will take advantage of drop-off locations for oil and grease.”

The drop-off program, now in its second year, has collected more than 1,000 gallons of used cooking oil. Fourteen Target, Costco and Home Depot stores in the East Bay will help educate the public about drop-off locations by placing stickers on turkey fryers.

“During the holidays, residents report far more sewer backups caused by cooking grease than at any time of year. This program will help residents avoid a very unpleasant situation, and it helps protect the Bay,” says Dave Williams, EBMUD’s Director of Wastewater.

(MORE)

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Homeowners can protect themselves and the Bay from sewage spills by taking simple steps to reduce the amount of fats, oil and grease that get into their pipes.

- Use one of the following drop-off locations to dispose of large volumes of oil and grease:
 - **EBMUD Wastewater Treatment Plant:** 2020 Wake Avenue, Oakland CA. Go to the guard station for directions to the self-service receptacle. Open seven days a week for all EBMUD residential customers.
 - **West County Integrated Waste Management Authority:** 101 Pittsburg, Richmond. Open every Thursday and Friday, and the first Saturday of the month, 9 a.m. – 4 p.m., closed for lunch 12 – 12:30 p.m. Open to residents of Crockett, El Cerrito, El Sobrante, Hercules, Kensington, Pinole, Port Costa, Richmond, Rodeo and San Pablo.
 - **Central Contra Costa Household Hazardous Waste Facility:** 4797 Imhoff Place, Martinez, CA.
Open Tuesday – Saturday, 9 a.m. - 4 p.m., Open to residents of Alamo, Blackhawk, Clayton, Concord, Clyde, Danville, Lafayette, Martinez, Moraga, Orinda, Pacheco, Pleasant Hill, San Ramon, Walnut Creek, and Central Contra Costa County unincorporated areas.
- Pour small volumes of cooled fats, oils and grease that will harden into a container with a lid and dispose of in the garbage.
- Mix small volumes of liquid grease with an absorbent material such as cat litter, place in lidded container and dispose of in the garbage.
- Wipe down greasy pots, pans, or dishes into the garbage, not the garbage disposal.
- Do not use warm water and soap to wash grease down the drain.

Baykeeper is a non-profit organization dedicated to protecting and enhancing water quality in the San Francisco Bay-Delta Estuary. The East Bay Municipal Utility District (EBMUD) supplies water and provides wastewater treatment for parts of Alameda and Contra Costa counties on the eastern side of San Francisco Bay in northern California.

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