

Commercial Kitchens Large On-site Sewage Systems Best Management Practices (BMPs)

Commercial kitchens typically produce high-strength wastewater. The wastewater is non-toxic, non-hazardous and is like domestic waste. However, commercial kitchens usually have wastewater with higher levels of biochemical oxygen demand (BOD₅), total suspended solids (TSS) and oils and grease (O&G). The increased waste strength can cause clogged pipes, back-ups, early failure of the drainfield and groundwater contamination.

Use these best management practices (BMPs) to help reduce the strength of your wastewater.

- Educate your employees about BMPs and why they are important.
- Avoid putting solids, certain liquids, and oils and grease down any drain.
- Use filtering drain plugs/screens in your sinks to keep solids from entering wastewater piping.
- Limit soda, milk, alcohol, and smaller food particles going down the drain. The BOD₅ of milk is 10 times higher than residential strength wastewater.
- Post “No Grease” signs above the sinks and on the front of dishwashers.
- Dry wipe your pots, pans, and dishes prior to washing. Dispose of wipes and food particles in the garbage or compost bins.
- Use water temperatures of less than 140° F in all sinks and dishwashers. Temperatures over 140° F will dissolve grease, but the grease will re-solidify in piping and your drainfield.
- Recycle waste cooking oils instead of putting them down the drain. Use a grease collection/recycling company.
- Clean under sink grease traps weekly. If the grease trap is more than 50% full when cleaned weekly, increase the cleaning frequency.
- Witness all grease interceptor or trap cleaning and maintenance activities to ensure the device is operating properly and is thoroughly cleaned.
- Use “dry” cleaning techniques when possible. Wipe down or sweep areas prior to washing.
- Choose multipurpose cleaners that are safer for worker health, your sewage system, and the environment. Don’t use degreasers except in spray and wipe applications.
- Use and dilute cleaners as indicated in the instructions.

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