Absolutely Positively Wellington
Me Heke ki Pōneke
Wellington City Council

Passive Grease Trap Fact Sheet

How does it work?

A passive grease trap is often found in the ground outside a kitchen's back door. It may be made up of two or three sections and is filled with cold water. The cold water in the trap cools down any hot waste water going into it. The fats and oils in the water solidify and float because they are lighter than water. Any solid material washed into the grease trap sinks to the bottom, forming sediment. The sections, called chambers, are separated by baffles. This increases the amount of separation of the grease by reducing movement in the chambers. The amount of grease and oil decreases from the first chamber to the last, allowing more and more grease to separate. Inspection points on the outside of both sides of the grease trap allow sampling to measure how well it works.

Tight fitting lids stop rainwater from getting into the grease trap. Raising the top of the grease trap above the surrounding ground or putting a raised lip around it also prevents rainwater from getting in.

Maintenance

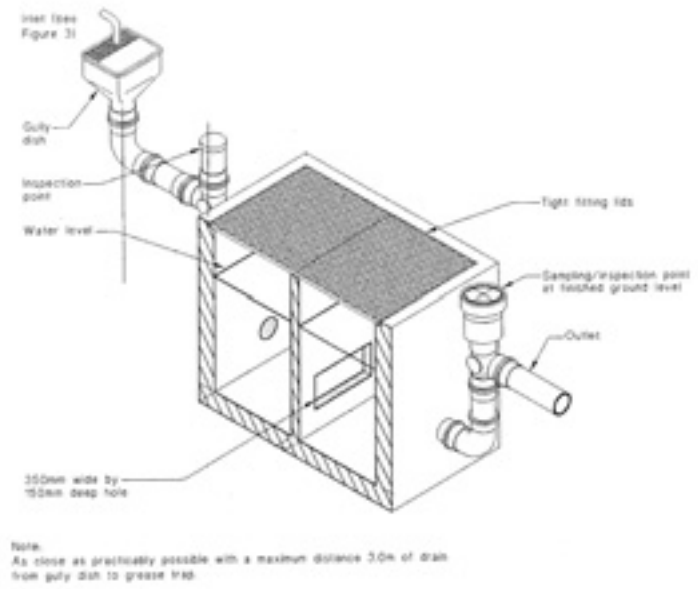
Maintenance of a passive grease trap involves removing both the layer of fat from the top and the sediment from the bottom of the grease trap. This involves sucking out the entire contents of the grease trap. Any remaining fats on the sides of the grease trap are then removed by scraping and hosing down. Any water or wastes produced from cleaning the walls must also be sucked out. The final important step is to refill the grease trap with cold water so it can immediately get back to work separating fats from the waste water. You must provide a cold water tap close to your grease trap to enable this to be done. Emptying is required on a regular basis. Once a month is often enough but it will depend on the type of business you operate, the size of your grease trap, and how much fat or oil is going into it. Your cleaning contractor or the Trade Waste Officer will be able to give you advice.

You must use a contractor licensed by the Council to empty your grease trap. These can be found under the Waste Disposal section in the Yellow Pages. They can offer a cleaning contract which will include regular maintenance. This will allow you to run your business without having to worry about your grease trap.

Inspections

An Environmental Health Officer or a Trade Waste Officer will visit you to ensure you are operating and maintaining your grease trap properly. They will inspect the condition of your grease trap and may ask questions about how it is used. You must keep records at your premises of how often it is cleaned. This is to show the inspector when they ask.

A sampling and inspection point must be installed on the outlet of your grease trap. This will allow the Council to check that the waste water going into the sewer from your grease trap is acceptable under the trade waste bylaw.



For further information, please contact the Trade Waste Officer at Wellington City Council on 499 4444 or visit us online at www.Wellington.govt.nz

PDWC57980