GREASE CLEANING — GUIDE

Grease trap pumping rules differ by city

Compare published guidance from Austin, Portland and Toronto. Confirm the rule for your device and service address.

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Find the sewer authority for the kitchen address. Then identify the device. A city may use a calendar limit, an accumulation limit, or both. The following rules are local examples, not a shared North American standard.

Austin

Austin Water says to pump at least every 90 days, or sooner if grease and solids reach 50% of the wetted height measured as described on its page. It says to use a City-permitted liquid waste hauler. Keep the pump-out manifests onsite for three years. These statements come from Austin Water's maintenance guidance, fetched on the date below.

Portland

Portland says the City sets cleaning frequency from the establishment, interceptor size and flow. Most interceptors need cleaning when FOG and solids reach 25%. The City notes that some high-efficiency devices can accumulate up to 75%. Do not select that exception yourself. Ask the City which limit applies to your installed device. The page also requires a cleaning report after every cleaning.

Toronto

Toronto's maintenance page says a hydromechanical interceptor is serviced every four weeks, before combined grease and solids reach 25% of liquid volume, or before its rated grease capacity is exceeded, whichever comes first. A different frequency needs City permission. The page says gravity interceptors are pumped before combined deposits exceed 25% of liquid volume. It specifies at least seven years of servicing and disposal records.

Make the service order specific

Record the device type, location and identification plate. Ask the authority to confirm the applicable interval and measurement method. Put both the calendar deadline and the accumulation trigger on the service order.

Ask the hauler for the measured condition, work completed, device defects and disposal record. Save the invoice and manifest in the kitchen's maintenance folder. Assign someone to check that reports were submitted where required.

If drains back up or the device fails, request qualified help. Do not wait for the next calendar date. Do not use an online estimator to override the local rule.

Sources

- Austin Water, Grease Trap Maintenance. Fetched 2026-11-10.
- Portland Environmental Services, Grease Interceptors and How to Maintain Them. Fetched 2026-11-10.
- Toronto Water, Grease Interceptor Maintenance, page modified May 14, 2026. Fetched 2026-11-10.

For information only. Confirm the current requirements with your local authority.

Frequently asked questions

Does every city use the same percentage?

No. Austin, Portland and Toronto publish different limits and conditions. Confirm the rule for the kitchen address and device.