GREASE CLEANING — GUIDE

# Grease trap vs interceptor: identify the installed device

*Find the device type before you request pumping or apply a maintenance rule.*

Updated November 10, 2026

The names can overlap. Portland calls hydromechanical grease interceptors "grease traps" in its guidance. Austin also uses grease trap and grease interceptor together. Use the equipment plate and approved plans when you request service.

## Hydromechanical and gravity devices

Portland describes hydromechanical interceptors as devices that may be indoors above or below the floor, or installed outside. It describes gravity interceptors as outdoor tanks. That is a useful distinction, but location alone does not establish the type.

Toronto's guidance assigns different maintenance conditions to hydromechanical interceptors, grease recovery devices, solids interceptors and gravity interceptors. A small box under a sink is not enough information to choose a servicing rule.

## Collect the facts before calling

Find the maker, model, rated capacity and device type. Photograph the identification plate if it is safely accessible. Locate the service record and approved plumbing plan. Note where the covers are and how a service crew can reach them.

Do not lift heavy lids or enter a tank to collect information. Ask a qualified contractor to identify a device when the plate or record is missing.

## Send a useful service request

*We need service for the grease removal device at our kitchen. The model is __.* **The device type shown in our records is . Its access point is __.** *Please confirm the cleaning scope, waste transport arrangements, reporting and any access work needed before the visit.*

Ask whether the service removes the entire contents and includes inspection of components. Toronto describes that as proper servicing on its maintenance page. Confirm the local method and disposal requirements with your own sewer authority.

## Keep separate systems separate

A wastewater interceptor does not clean an exhaust duct. Book exhaust cleaning from the hood and duct inspection findings. Book interceptor service from the device condition and sewer authority's requirements. Use separate records so a completed visit cannot hide overdue work on another system.

## Sources


- Portland Environmental Services, Grease Interceptors and How to Maintain Them. Fetched 2026-11-10.
- Austin Water, Grease Trap Maintenance. 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 the name grease trap identify the maintenance rule?**
No. Identify the device type and confirm the rule with the sewer authority.