GREASE CLEANING — GUIDE

NFPA 96 hood cleaning frequency: plan the inspection first

Use cooking activity to plan exhaust inspections. Arrange cleaning from the findings and local requirements.

Updated November 10, 2026

A cleaning calendar starts with the cooking activity. It also needs a record of what the inspector finds. An inspection interval is not permission to leave grease in the system until the next visit.

Inspection frequency table

HoodFilters reproduces the NFPA 96 inspection table for the edition shown on its page. Its dated contractor-selection article confirms these are inspection frequencies, not automatic cleaning intervals.

| Cooking activity | Inspection frequency in the summary | | --- | --- | | Solid fuel cooking | Monthly | | High volume, including round-the-clock cooking, charbroiling and wok cooking | Quarterly | | Moderate volume | Semiannually | | Low volume, such as seasonal kitchens and churches | Annually |

The summary says to clean contaminated parts when an inspection finds deposits from grease-laden vapors. It also says not to let surfaces become heavily contaminated. These are statements from that published summary. Ask your fire authority which adopted edition and requirements apply to your kitchen.

Build a usable schedule

Write down the appliances, fuels and operating pattern. Include changes in menus and opening hours. Give that record to the inspection contractor. Ask the contractor and fire authority to confirm the category in writing.

Keep separate calendar entries for exhaust inspection, exhaust cleaning, grease trap service and suppression service. A clean hood does not show that a trap was pumped or that a suppression system was serviced.

After each visit, file the findings beside the next planned date. If grease accumulation changes, ask whether the next visit should move forward. Do not extend a schedule just because the visible hood looks clean.

Before renewing a contract

Ask whether the quote includes the hood, filters, duct route, fan and a report. Ask which parts cannot be reached. Have the contractor list those parts, with photos, before you treat the job as complete.

Sources

- HoodFilters, NFPA 96 summary. Fetched 2026-11-10.
- HoodFilters, contractor selection, published October 4, 2026. Fetched 2026-11-10.

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

Frequently asked questions

Is the table a mandatory cleaning calendar?

It is an inspection table. Cleaning depends on findings and the requirements that apply at your kitchen.