Southern California Grease Trap Maintenance Toolkit

A Scheduling, Documentation, and Staff Education Tool for Commercial Kitchen Facility Managers

How to Use This Toolkit

This toolkit helps commercial kitchen facility managers coordinate grease interceptor maintenance, educate kitchen and maintenance staff, and maintain the documentation required for regulatory compliance across Southern California's FOG programs. Use Part 1 to inventory your interceptors and establish your maintenance schedule. Use Part 2 to log all service visits and maintain compliance documentation. Use Part 3 for staff education materials including a kitchen posting guide. Use Part 4 as a daily and weekly operations checklist. Use Part 5 to prepare for and document compliance inspections. This toolkit covers both Hydromechanical Grease Interceptors - HGIs - and Gravity Grease Interceptors - GGIs. Complete all sections relevant to your device type. If your operation uses both, complete all sections.

This toolkit is provided as a general reference and operational planning tool for informational purposes. It does not constitute legal or regulatory advice. FOG compliance requirements vary by sewer agency across Southern California. Always verify current permit requirements with your serving sewer agency. Grease interceptor service must be performed by qualified personnel. GGI pump-out must be performed by a licensed grease hauler.

FACILITY AND PERMIT INFORMATION

Field	Details
Facility Name / Address	
Sewer Agency	☐ LASAN - City of Los Angeles ☐ LA County Sanitation Districts ☐ Orange County Sanitation District ☐ Other: _____
Industrial Wastewater Permit Number	
Permit Issue Date	
Permit Renewal Date	
FOG Program Inspector / Contact	
Agency Phone / Email	
Number of HGIs at This Facility	
Number of GGIs at This Facility	
Licensed Grease Hauler - GGI Pump-Out	
HGI Cleaning Service Provider (if not in-house)	
Person Responsible for Grease Trap Program	
Last Full Toolkit Review Date	

PART 1: INTERCEPTOR INVENTORY AND MAINTENANCE SCHEDULE

Section 1A: HGI Inventory

Complete one row per HGI. The flow control fitting column is critical - this component is frequently missed during cleaning and directly affects device performance. Add rows as needed.

HGI ID	Location	Connected Fixtures	Rated Flow (gpm)	Rated Capacity	Installation Date / Est. Age	Cleaning Method	Flow Control Fitting Present	Flow Control Fitting Size	Cleaning Frequency	Last Cleaned	Next Cleaning Due	Condition Notes
			gpm	gallons		☐ In-house ☐ Service	☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ Unknown					

						vendor						
			gpm	gallons		☐ In-house ☐ Service vendor	☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ Unknown					
			gpm	gallons		☐ In-house ☐ Service vendor	☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ Unknown					
			gpm	gallons		☐ In-house ☐ Service vendor	☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ Unknown					

HGI Cleaning Frequency Reference

Operation Type	Typical HGI Cleaning Frequency	Notes
High-volume full-service restaurant - FOG-heavy menu	Weekly	Fry-heavy, sauce-heavy, or high-volume dishwashing operations
Full-service restaurant - moderate FOG output	Every 2 weeks	Monitor accumulation rate and adjust if device fills faster than expected
Quick-service or lower-volume operation	Monthly	Confirm by checking fill level at 2-week mark initially
Any operation during seasonal volume peaks	Increase to next frequency tier	Holiday season, summer peaks, catering events - adjust proactively
Any operation after adding menu items or extended hours	Reassess immediately	Do not assume prior frequency is still adequate

Section 1B: GGI Inventory (*Add rows as needed.*)

GGI ID	Location	Total Capacity (gallons)	Compartments	Access Point Location	Licensed Hauler	Pump-Out Frequency	Last Pump-Out Date	FOG Level at Last Service	Solids Level at Last Service	Combined % at Last Service	Next Pump-Out Due	Manifest Number - Last Service
		gallons						inches	inches	%		
		gallons						inches	inches	%		

GGI Pump-Out Frequency Guidance

The 25 percent rule governs GGI pump-out timing in California - the combined FOG layer and solids accumulation must not reach 25 percent of total liquid depth before pump-out. Frequency must be based on actual accumulation rates, not a fixed calendar interval.

☐ FOG and solids level measured and documented at every pump-out service visit

☐ If combined level is above 15 percent at the time of scheduled service - increase pump-out frequency before the next visit

☐ If combined level is consistently below 10 percent at service - frequency may be extended cautiously with monitoring

☐ Any change in kitchen volume, menu, or hours triggers a reassessment of pump-out frequency

Annual Maintenance Schedule Overview

Use this to plan the full year of maintenance activity across all interceptors.

Month	HGI Cleanings Scheduled	GGI Pump-Outs Scheduled	Other Maintenance	Compliance Deadlines	Notes
January					
February					
March					
April					
May					
June					
July					
August					
September					
October					
November					
December					

PART 2: SERVICE LOG AND COMPLIANCE DOCUMENTATION

Section 2A: HGI Service Log

Complete one entry per cleaning event per HGI. This log is the primary compliance documentation for HGI maintenance. Add rows as needed.

Date	HGI ID	Service Type	Performed By	Grease Cap Level at Service	Solids Level at Service	Flow Control Fitting Cleaned	Baffles Cleaned and Correctly Reassembled	Lid Seal Confirmed	Any Damage or Findings	Corrective Action Taken	Next Service Due
		☐ Routine cleaning ☐ Emergency ☐ Inspection only ☐ Repair		☐ Light ☐ Moderate ☐ Heavy	☐ Light ☐ Moderate ☐ Heavy	☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ Not present	☐ Yes ☐ No	☐ Intact ☐ Damaged			
		☐ Routine cleaning ☐ Emergency ☐ Inspection only ☐ Repair		☐ Light ☐ Moderate ☐ Heavy	☐ Light ☐ Moderate ☐ Heavy	☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ Not present	☐ Yes ☐ No	☐ Intact ☐ Damaged			

Section 2B: GGI Service Log and Manifest Tracking

Complete one entry per pump-out event per GGI. Retain original manifests alongside this log. Add rows as needed.

Date	GGI ID	Hauler Company	Hauler License Number	Technician	FOG Level at Service	Solids Level at Service	Combined % at Service	Volume Pumped (gallons)	Baffle Condition	Lid Condition	Findings	Manifest Number	Manifest Received	Filed
					inches	inches	%		☐ Good ☐ Needs repair	☐ Intact ☐ Damaged			☐ Yes ☐ No	☐ Yes ☐ No
					inches	inches	%		☐ Good ☐ Needs repair	☐ Intact ☐ Damaged			☐ Yes ☐ No	☐ Yes ☐ No
					inches	inches	%		☐ Good ☐ Needs repair	☐ Intact ☐ Damaged			☐ Yes ☐ No	☐ Yes ☐ No

GGI FOG Level Trend Tracking

Track FOG and solids levels across consecutive service visits to confirm whether current pump-out frequency is maintaining the device within the 25 percent threshold.

Service Date	GGI ID	Combined % at Service	Interval Since Last Service (days)	Accumulation Rate (% per day)	Frequency Adjustment Needed
		%	days	%/day	☐ No - maintain current frequency ☐ Yes - increase frequency ☐ Yes - may extend frequency
		%	days	%/day	☐ No - maintain current frequency ☐ Yes - increase frequency ☐ Yes - may extend frequency
		%	days	%/day	☐ No - maintain current frequency ☐ Yes - increase frequency ☐ Yes - may extend frequency
		%	days	%/day	☐ No - maintain current frequency ☐ Yes - increase frequency ☐ Yes - may extend frequency

Documentation Retention Standards

Document	Minimum Retention	Notes
HGI service logs	3 years minimum	Available for inspection at facility at all times
GGI pump-out service records	3 years minimum	Available for inspection at facility at all times
Waste manifests - GGI pump-out	3 years minimum	Retain alongside service log entries

Industrial Wastewater Permit	Duration plus 3 years after expiration	
Sewer agency inspection records	3 years minimum	All notices, responses, and compliance confirmations
Repair records - any interceptor	3 years minimum	Document all repairs with description, date, and provider

PART 3: STAFF EDUCATION MATERIALS

Section 3A: Kitchen Staff Training Guide

Use this section to train kitchen staff on the practices that directly protect grease interceptor performance. Deliver during onboarding and at each annual refresher. Post relevant sections at point-of-use locations in the kitchen.

Why This Matters - What to Tell Your Kitchen Staff

The grease traps and interceptors in this kitchen are required by law. They catch the fats, oils, and grease from kitchen wastewater before it enters the sewer system. When they are overloaded - from cooking oil poured down drains, from scraps rinsed into sinks, from cleaning chemicals that push grease past the interceptor - they stop working. When they stop working, drains back up during service, odors build up in the kitchen, and health inspectors cite the operation. The practices below are not preferences - they are the kitchen habits that keep the drains clear, the interceptors functioning, and the facility out of compliance trouble.

The Five Practices That Protect the Grease Trap

Practice 1: Never pour cooking oil down any drain.

Used fryer oil, cooking oil, pan drippings, and any accumulated grease must go into the designated collection container - not down the sink, not down the floor drain, not anywhere near a drain. The collection container is located at: _____. When the container is full, it must be reported to: _____. Disposal is handled by: _____.

Why it matters: A single fryer emptied down a drain adds more FOG than the grease trap was designed to capture in a full day of normal kitchen operation. Oil poured down drains is a permit violation and a direct cause of the blockages and backups that shut down kitchen service.

Practice 2: Dry-wipe before washing.

Pots, pans, cooking vessels, utensils, and prep surfaces should be wiped clean of visible grease and food residue with a paper towel or scraper before washing. The wiped material goes in the trash, not in the drain.

Why it matters: Dry-wiping before washing removes the majority of FOG before it ever contacts water. FOG that reaches the drain system in water is harder for the interceptor to capture than FOG removed before washing.

Practice 3: Scrape plates and pans into the trash, not the sink.

Food scraps, sauces, and solid waste should be scraped into the trash before pans or dishes are rinsed or washed. Do not rinse food solids down any connected sink or floor drain.

Why it matters: Solids that enter the grease trap settle to the bottom of the device and reduce its effective capacity. More solids means faster fill-up, more frequent cleaning, and more risk of backup during service.

Practice 4: Use cleaning chemicals at the correct dilution.

Degreasers and cleaning products should be used at the dilution rates specified on the label, not at higher concentrations to cut grease faster. Do not pour high-concentration degreasers directly into drains connected to the grease trap.

Why it matters: High-concentration degreasers and enzyme cleaners can emulsify grease - breaking it into tiny droplets that the interceptor cannot capture. Emulsified grease passes through the trap and accumulates in the drain lines downstream, where it causes blockages.

Practice 5: Report slow drains and odors immediately.

If a drain connected to the grease trap is draining slowly, or if unusual odors are noticeable from the drain area, report it to the manager or facility contact immediately. Do not wait until the next shift or the next day.

Contact for drain and grease trap issues: _____

Why it matters: A slow drain is an early warning of a developing blockage. Reporting it early allows the problem to be addressed before it becomes a backup during service.

Section 3B: Staff Training Log

Document every training session. High-turnover kitchens require consistent documentation that new hires have been trained regardless of when they started.

Date	Training Topic	Staff Trained (names or count)	Trainer Name	Format	Acknowledgment / Sign-Off	Notes
	☐ Full orientation ☐ Oil disposal ☐ Dry-wipe practice ☐ Chemical use ☐ Reporting ☐ Refresher - all topics			☐ In-person ☐ Posted guide ☐ Written handout	☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ N/A	
	☐ Full orientation ☐ Oil disposal ☐ Dry-wipe practice ☐ Chemical use ☐ Reporting ☐ Refresher - all topics			☐ In-person ☐ Posted guide ☐ Written handout	☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ N/A	
	☐ Full orientation ☐ Oil disposal ☐ Dry-wipe practice ☐ Chemical use ☐ Reporting ☐ Refresher - all topics			☐ In-person ☐ Posted guide ☐ Written handout	☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ N/A	
	☐ Full orientation ☐ Oil disposal ☐ Dry-wipe practice ☐ Chemical use ☐ Reporting ☐ Refresher - all topics			☐ In-person ☐ Posted guide ☐ Written handout	☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ N/A	
	☐ Full orientation ☐ Oil disposal ☐ Dry-wipe practice ☐ Chemical use ☐ Reporting ☐ Refresher - all topics			☐ In-person ☐ Posted guide ☐ Written handout	☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ N/A	

New Hire Grease Trap Training Checklist

Complete for every new kitchen staff member at onboarding.

☐ Five practices explained and demonstrated in person

☐ Used cooking oil disposal location and procedure confirmed - staff can identify container and knows reporting procedure

☐ Dry-wipe procedure demonstrated at three-compartment sink or dishwashing station

☐ Correct chemical dilution confirmed - staff knows to check label, not use at full concentration in drains

☐ Slow drain and odor reporting contact confirmed - staff knows who to call and when

☐ Kitchen posting locations identified - staff knows where to find the posted reference guide

New hire name: _____ Start date: _____ Trainer: _____ Date completed: _____

Section 3C: Kitchen Posting Guide

Print and post these reference signs at the locations indicated. Laminate for durability in kitchen environments. Replace when visibly damaged or faded.

POST AT FRYER AND COOKING STATIONS:

USED COOKING OIL - DO NOT POUR DOWN ANY DRAIN

All used fryer oil and cooking grease must go into the collection container.

Collection container location: _____

Container full? Report to: _____

Pouring oil down the drain is a permit violation and causes drain backups.

POST AT THREE-COMPARTMENT SINK AND DISHWASHING STATION:

BEFORE WASHING - WIPE FIRST, THEN WASH

1. Scrape all food solids into the trash
2. Dry-wipe visible grease from pans and utensils with a paper towel

3. Paper towel goes in the trash - not the drain
4. Then wash

This keeps the grease trap working and the drains clear.

POST AT PREP SINKS AND FLOOR DRAINS:

SLOW DRAIN? UNUSUAL ODOR? REPORT IT NOW.

Do not wait. Report slow drains or unusual drain odors immediately to:
Name: _____
Phone / Radio: _____
Early reporting prevents backups during service.

POST IN CLEANING SUPPLY STORAGE AREA:

CLEANING CHEMICALS - USE AT CORRECT DILUTION

Always mix cleaning chemicals at the dilution rate on the label.
Do not pour concentrated degreasers directly into drains.
High-concentration chemicals push grease past the trap and cause blockages downstream.
Questions about chemical dilution? Ask: _____

PART 4: DAILY AND WEEKLY OPERATIONS CHECKLIST

Use this checklist to maintain grease trap performance between service visits. Assign responsibility for each task by shift or role.

Daily Checklist - Every Operating Day

Task	Responsible	AM Shift	PM Shift	Notes
Used cooking oil collection container - confirm in use and not overfull		☐ Confirmed ☐ Issue noted	☐ Confirmed ☐ Issue noted	
Dry-wipe practice - spot check at dishwashing and prep stations		☐ Confirmed ☐ Reminded	☐ Confirmed ☐ Reminded	
Floor drain screens - confirmed in place and clear of debris		☐ Confirmed ☐ Cleared	☐ Confirmed ☐ Cleared	
Drain odors - any unusual odors noted at HGI locations or floor drains		☐ None ☐ Odor noted - reported	☐ None ☐ Odor noted - reported	
Slow drain - any drain draining slower than normal		☐ None ☐ Slow drain noted - reported	☐ None ☐ Slow drain noted - reported	
GGI access area - confirmed accessible and lid confirmed sealed		☐ Confirmed	☐ Confirmed	

Weekly Checklist

Task	Responsible	Completed	Date	Notes
HGI visual check - lid condition, no odors escaping at lid		☐ Yes ☐ Issue found		
Flow control fitting - confirmed clear at each HGI (if cleaning interval is weekly, incorporate into cleaning)		☐ Yes ☐ Restricted - cleaned		
Cooking oil collection container - confirmed at appropriate fill level, arranged for pickup if needed		☐ Yes ☐ Pickup arranged		
Drain screen condition - all screens present, not damaged		☐ Yes ☐ Replaced		
Kitchen posting guide - all posted signs confirmed legible and in place		☐ Yes ☐ Replaced		
HGI cleaning - if on weekly schedule, confirmed completed and logged		☐ Yes ☐ N/A - not on weekly schedule		
Any slow drain or odor incidents this week - reviewed and addressed		☐ None ☐ Addressed		

Issue Escalation Reference

Issue Observed	Escalate To	Timeline
Slow drain at any HGI-connected fixture	Facility manager	Same day
Drain backup during service	Facility manager - emergency service call	Immediately
Grease or oily film in floor drain water	Facility manager	Same day
Unusual odor increase from HGI or GGI	Facility manager	Same day
Used oil container overfull - no room for additional disposal	Facility manager	Before next cooking session
GGI lid damaged or not properly sealed	Facility manager	Same day
Any communication from sewer agency	Facility manager	Same day - do not hold for next scheduled check-in

PART 5: INSPECTION READINESS

Southern California sewer agencies including LASAN conduct compliance inspections of Food Service Establishments under FOG programs. Inspections may be announced or unannounced. This section prepares for both.

Inspection Readiness Checklist - Maintain at All Times

Permits and Documentation

☐ Current Industrial Wastewater Permit posted or accessible at facility
☐ HGI service logs current and accessible - last three years minimum
☐ GGI pump-out records current and accessible - last three years minimum
☐ Waste manifests from GGI pump-out services filed alongside service records
☐ Any sewer agency inspection reports from prior visits retained and accessible
☐ Any repair records for interceptors or drain lines retained and accessible

Physical Compliance

☐ All HGIs within capacity - not due for cleaning or overdue
☐ All HGIs correctly assembled - lids sealed, baffles correctly positioned, flow control fittings clear
☐ GGI - confirmed within 25 percent threshold, not overdue for pump-out
☐ GGI access area clear - no stored materials blocking access, lid properly sealed
☐ All kitchen drain screens in place
☐ Used cooking oil collection containers in use at cooking stations
☐ No evidence of grease film in floor drains or slow drain conditions

Kitchen Best Management Practices Visible

☐ Posted signage in place at fryer/cooking stations - oil disposal
☐ Posted signage in place at dishwashing area - dry-wipe practice
☐ Posted signage in place at floor drain or prep area - reporting procedure
☐ Staff on current shift can explain oil disposal procedure if asked

Inspection Event Log *(add rows as needed)*

Date	Inspector Name	Agency	Inspection Type	Findings	Response Required	Response Sent	Outcome
			☐ Routine ☐ Follow-up ☐ Complaint-based ☐ Permit review		☐ Yes ☐ No	☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ N/A	
			☐ Routine ☐ Follow-up ☐ Complaint-based ☐ Permit review		☐ Yes ☐ No	☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ N/A	
			☐ Routine ☐ Follow-up ☐ Complaint-based ☐ Permit review		☐ Yes ☐ No	☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ N/A	

Non-Compliance Response Protocol

If a compliance notice or violation is received from the sewer agency:

☐ Notice received - date and reference number documented in inspection log
☐ Required response deadline identified and calendared immediately
☐ Nature of the finding identified - maintenance overdue, record gap, device condition, permit issue, or other
☐ Corrective action initiated immediately - do not wait until deadline
☐ Written response to agency drafted and sent before deadline
☐ Copies of all corrective action documentation retained
☐ Follow-up inspection if required - confirmed and scheduled
☐ Agency confirmation of compliance restoration received and filed

ANNUAL PROGRAM REVIEW CHECKLIST

Complete once per year - ideally before the permit renewal period - to confirm the full grease trap maintenance program is current and effective.

☐ HGI inventory confirmed current - all devices accounted for
☐ GGI inventory confirmed current - all devices and access points accounted for
☐ Maintenance frequencies reviewed against actual accumulation rates documented in service logs - adjusted where needed
☐ All service records confirmed current and filed - no gaps in HGI or GGI documentation
☐ All waste manifests confirmed received and filed
☐ Industrial Wastewater Permit confirmed current - renewal scheduled if expiring
☐ Staff training confirmed current - all active kitchen staff trained, new hire records complete
☐ Posted signage confirmed in place and legible at all required locations
☐ Inspection readiness checklist reviewed - all items confirmed current
☐ Service provider performance reviewed - frequency, documentation quality, responsiveness
☐ Any recurring drain issues or odor events from the past year reviewed - root causes identified and addressed
☐ Cooking oil disposal program confirmed current - licensed recycler engaged and service documented