



ACCEPTANCE CRITERIA FOR FOOD OUTLETS – PUB 06B

Introduction

The Water Corporation's wastewater system is primarily designed to service households with normal domestic wastewater. We also make the wastewater system available for industrial wastes wherever it is safe and appropriate to do so. Not all industrial wastes are compatible with our system.

This brochure describes the acceptance criteria that we use for assessing industrial wastes and how different types of wastes may need to be treated before we can accept them into the wastewater system. Some types of waste cannot be accepted into the wastewater system.

What Do I Have To Do?

Apply to the Water Corporation for an Industrial Waste Permit. Application forms are available from our website.

We will assess your business and identify what you need to do to make your sewer discharge safe. We may require you to install a pre-treatment fixture such as a grease trap or oil arrestor to partially treat your wastewater before it is discharged to sewer.

If we can accept the waste (after any required on-site pre-treatment) we will issue you with an Industrial Waste Permit. The permit will allow you to discharge the waste under specified conditions.

Why do we Need Acceptance Criteria?

Discharges to sewer which do not meet our acceptance criteria could have serious consequences for people's health, or the environment.

Unauthorised discharges could result in:

- A threat to the health and safety of workers within the wastewater system
- Damage to the urban wastewater system, or poisoning of the biological processes at our treatment plants
- A threat to public health directly from your discharge, or from any sewer failures which might be caused by your discharge
- An inability to reclaim and re-use our treated wastewater, or our Biosolids treatment by-products, in industry or agriculture; or
- A threat to the environment from any failure of the sewer system, or by contaminants which cannot be removed by our treatment processes.

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By applying our acceptance criteria, and encouraging pre-treatment at source, we can maximise the availability of our wastewater system for industrial wastes, while keeping the environment and our community safe.

Acceptance Criteria for Food Outlets

The acceptance criteria most likely to be of relevance to food outlets are listed below. These acceptance criteria are based on wastewater industry standards and Water Corporation investigations.

If you have activities other than food preparation within your business, or unusual issues in relation to your wastewater, then you may need more information. A complete listing of wastewater quality parameters and associated acceptance limits is available from our website or customer service centres.

Fats, Oils and Grease (FOG)

Fats, oils and grease can coalesce and solidify in the sewer, particularly as it cools within the underground sewer system. Water level sensors and pump switches can get fouled by grease, causing sewerage overflows when pumps fail to start.

Even though domestic households might generate some FOG waste, its only in very small quantities, and it gets diluted with much larger volumes of greywater from showers and washing machines. The FOG waste from commercial kitchens is in much higher quantities and is largely undiluted.

We generally control FOG wastes by requiring pre-treatment at the source. This usually requires a grease trap for commercial kitchens.

Grease traps have only limited capacity, and as they fill with fats and sludge, will reach a point where they are no longer effective. Consequently, we also require that your grease trap is properly maintained, and the captured fats and sludge are pumped out regularly.

A minimum frequency for your grease trap pump out will be determined when you apply for an Industrial Waste Permit. For existing customers, the minimum frequency previously set under the DEP's WasteTrack service (which ceased on 1 July 2003) will continue to apply.

Suspended Solids (SS)

Suspended solids can cause silting within sewers and pumps stations, leading to blockages, failures and overflows. Suspended solids also result in excessive loading of grit at treatment plants, increasing costs and risk.

We may require an appropriate form of pre-treatment to physically separate the solids from your wastewater before it goes to sewer. For most food businesses, a simple bucket trap would be sufficient to capture any solids.

Biological Oxygen Demand (BOD)

Wastewater with high organic content can overload our treatment plants, or disrupt them by altering the nutrient balance within our system. However, the relatively low volumes of discharges from small food business are rarely sufficient for BOD to become an issue.

Garbage Grinders

Garbage grinders in sinks or otherwise connected to the sewer are not permitted in Western Australia – for either domestic or commercial use.

Disposing of solid wastes, via the sewer, places significant loading on our systems, with particularly high biological oxygen demand and suspended solids loads. The nutrient loading of crushed solid waste is also significant, resulting in increased treatment costs and greater pressures on the environment.

Other disposal options exist for solid waste – such as the regular kerbside collection provided by your local government – which are far more efficient economically, and far better for the environment.

Dish and Glasswashers

Hot soapy water can flush grease and other deposits away and concentrate it in cooler parts of the sewer system, where it coalesces again to cause blockages. Deposits also occur as the biodegradable detergents start to break down, and then release their load of oil and grease. Hot soapy water will seriously affect the proper functioning of your grease trap.

For this reason, we require that your dishwasher or washing machine wastewater is separately plumbed to bypass your grease trap.

If this is not possible, then we may be able to accept your discharge if alternative measures are taken.

Other Limitations

Other wastewater contaminants and physical characteristics subject to acceptance criteria. For example:

- Flammable, explosive or corrosive materials can not be discharged to sewer
- Wastewater that is either highly acidic, or highly alkaline, is subject to controls
- Strict limits apply to metals, particularly heavy metals
- Acceptance of chemical-laden wastewater is subject to individual assessment
- Other limitations apply to stormwater or freshwater discharging to sewer, radioactive substances, genetically modified organisms, and infectious substances.

Please enquire if you think these criteria may apply to your situation.

More Information?

You can find more information about the Industrial Waste service on our website at http://www.watercorporation.com.au/l/industrialwaste_index.cfm. Or if you prefer, please call us on 13 13 95.