

November 24, 2009

## **City aims to protect wastewater system during holidays**

ADA – Don't pour that cooking oil down the drain – recycle it!

That's the word from City of Ada Environmental Coordinator Scott Roberson, who has spearheaded an effort to install a temporary cooking oil recycling center for public use during the holiday season – when food waste is at a peak.

Recycling cooking oil (grease) helps keep the city's wastewater system in optimum operating condition – a health benefit for all Ada residents.

“Holiday meals are often rich in fats, oils, and grease,” Roberson said. “This can be bad not only for the body, but also for the city's wastewater system.”

Roberson said citizens should never, under any circumstances, pour cooking oil or grease down a drain.

“It's detrimental to the homeowner's drainage system as well as to the system as a whole,” he said. “And contrary to popular belief, running hot water or pouring detergent down with it does not help. As grease moves through the pipes, it separates from the water, coats the pipes, and ultimately blocks the flow of sewage.”

Blocked sewage lines may lead to overflow – never the best of holiday surprises.

The cooking oil recycling center is located in the south parking lot of the Pontotoc County Fairgrounds where it will be accessible to local residents around the clock. It will remain there through the Thanksgiving, Christmas, and New Year's Day holidays.

“If you have only a small quantity of grease to discard, you should place it in the trash,” Roberson said. “If you have a large amount due to holiday cooking, such as from deep-frying a turkey, please take advantage of the recycling center at the fairgrounds.”

Roberson offered three more tips for keeping food waste out of the drainage system.

1. Fats, oils, and grease can be poured into a coffee can or other durable, heat-safe container and stored in a freezer for later use.
2. Dishes and pots that are coated with greasy leftovers should be wiped clean with a paper towel before being washed (or placed in a dishwasher).
3. Deposit all food scraps into the trash. Avoid putting scraps in a garbage disposal or drain.

“The best solution is always prevention,” Roberson added. “We hope citizens utilize the cooking oil recycling center this holiday season, and remember to help us keep our wastewater system working properly all year long.”

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