



**RRWA Environmental Column - November 2006**  
***From the Pan, to the Can - Keep Grease Out of the Drain!***

Many families in the Russian River area will be settling down to a home cooked turkey dinner with all of the trimmings this holiday season. Because the holidays tend to create a cooking frenzy, the Russian River Watershed Association (RRWA) is reminding residents to properly dispose of fats, oils, grease and food scraps (...*from the pan to the can...*) to avoid costly and unsanitary clogged pipes.

Cooking grease poured down the sink drains can block sewer pipelines when it congeals and cause sewer backups and overflows – into the environment, and into your home! This practice can be costly to homeowners and is certainly bad for the environment. These types of grease-related sewer spills are preventable through simple measures in the home.

To keep our pipes “Fat-Free”, RRWA encourages you to:

- Never pour fats, oils, or cooking grease down the sink or garbage disposal.
- Pour excess grease into a container with a tight fitting lid and freeze for disposal with your household garbage; and wipe the remaining grease from the pan with a scraper or paper towel.
- Place food scraps in appropriate waste containers or compost piles rather than into the drain or garbage disposal.



For more information regarding the proper disposal of fats, oils and grease, call the Sonoma County Eco-Desk at 707-565-3375 or go to [www.recyclenow.org](http://www.recyclenow.org) [[www.recyclenow.org](http://www.recyclenow.org)].

Large amounts of cooking oil from turkey fryers can also be filtered, frozen and reused for the preparation of another meal. To place large amounts in the trash, kitty litter can be used to absorb the oil, which can then be placed in the garbage.

Smaller quantities (less than 10 gallons) of clean, strained vegetable oil can be deposited at several local restaurants for bio-diesel processing – see the Sonoma County phone book recycling guide for locations or call Yokayo Biofuels in Ukiah at 707-472-0900.

*The Russian River Watershed Association (RRWA) is an association of eleven cities, counties, and special districts in the Russian River watershed that are working together to coordinate regional programs for clean water, fisheries restoration, and watershed enhancement.*