

# Small Group Meeting Summary: Grease Haulers and Interceptor Maintenance Providers

## Food Sector Grease Interceptor Bylaw Review

Meeting Date: October 3, 2018

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## 1. Background

Metro Vancouver, in an effort to reduce the amount of fats, oils and grease entering the sewer system, is engaging food sector establishments and related stakeholders to obtain feedback on a review of the Food Sector Grease Interceptor Bylaw (the bylaw).

Specific areas of interest and exploration included:

- Effectiveness of the current bylaw
- Challenges associated with meeting bylaw requirements
- Educational initiatives that might improve awareness, understanding and compliance with the bylaw

Metro Vancouver recognizes that changes to the Food Sector Grease Interceptor Bylaw (the bylaw) could have an impact on stakeholders and is committed to delivering a responsive, transparent stakeholder engagement program. A variety of forums are being used to learn about stakeholder issues and interests related to the bylaw. Information collected during the engagement period will inform the bylaw review. Results and recommendations will be reported back to stakeholders and the Utilities Committee and Greater Vancouver Sewerage & Drainage District (GVS&DD) Board at the end of the process.

Small Group Meetings are being hosted to support a discussion of factors inhibiting compliance and the special considerations of stakeholder groups with unique interests or characteristics.

## 2. Notification

In August 2018, Metro Vancouver issued invitations to engage in the bylaw review, by email and post, to over 10,000 Food Sector Establishments and other stakeholders within Metro Vancouver. Invited stakeholders responded to Metro Vancouver by email to confirm their interest. Those confirming their interest and availability were assigned to the appropriate stakeholder meeting.

## 3. Small Group Meeting

Grease Haulers and Interceptor Maintenance Providers

Tuesday, October 3, 1:00 p.m. – 3:00 p.m.

Metro Vancouver – 28th Floor Conference Centre  
Metrotower Office Complex  
4730 Kingsway  
Burnaby

**Materials**

- PowerPoint presentation
- Food Sector Grease Interceptor Bylaw No. 268, 2012
- Grease & Commercial Kitchens brochure

**Meeting Agenda & Format**

- Introductions
- Engagement process
- Background
- Topic 1 – Experience with grease interceptor issues
- Topic 2 – Unique business/sector attributes
- Topic 3 – Training & education tools
- Final thoughts & next steps

**Participants**

NAME	ORGANIZATION
Adam Ramzi	Adam's Tank Service
Salman Mohiuddin	Parkland Fuel
Mike Halligan	Parkland Fuel
Wayne Wong	Cambie Industrial
Christopher Fletcher	Walker Environmental

## Presenters & Support

NAME	ORGANIZATION
Tom Sadleir	Program Manager, Public Involvement, Metro Vancouver
Linda Parkinson	Program Manager, Source Control Utility & Planning, Metro Vancouver
Marlene Fuhrmann	Permitting Specialist, Environmental Regulation and Enforcement, Metro Vancouver
Douglas Elford	Environmental Protection Officer, City of Vancouver
Kirsty Dick	Creative Services Manager, Lucent Quay (Facilitator)
Galen Aker	Communications Coordinator, Lucent Quay (Recorder)

## 4. Presentation

Metro Vancouver presented to participants the following to begin the engagement meeting:

### Engagement Process – Tom Sadleir

- Purpose of the bylaw review
- Engagement objectives
- Timeline

### Background – Linda Parkinson

- Scope of Metro Vancouver
- Definition of source control
- Effects of fats, oils and grease on infrastructure
- Description of current bylaw

### Bylaw Enforcement – Marlene Fuhrmann

- Working with municipalities to identify “hot spots”
- Inspections to date
- Common violations
- Fees

## 5. Feedback

A series of discussion topics were used to obtain feedback on the bylaw review. The following lays out the comments and questions that were raised at the meeting.

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### Topic 1

Are you aware of requirements for service providers?

Are the requirements for service providers clear and easy to understand?

In your experience what is the general level of compliance with the bylaw?

Do you think the maintenance frequency required under the bylaw is appropriate?

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- A Sludge Judge is a pipe that sucks out the airflow and allows measurement of fats, oils and grease and solids. It is used to estimate the amount of grease.
- [One service provider's] technicians are equipped with a hand-held device (before-and-after pic, pie grid for percentages, identify any deficiencies) – that is electronically sent to customers.
- Percentages of fats, oils and grease in grease interceptors are only estimates; there is no way to be 100% accurate. There is anywhere between a 10-20% variance.
- A template for reporting based on industry standard would be valuable for consistency of reporting to customers.
- Each company has their own sticker that tracks when an interceptor was last pumped out and maintained.
- Bylaw language appears to be clear and straightforward in terms of hauler requirements
- Plastic traps are easier to clean and maintain. Hanging interceptor traps are difficult. Ninety-five percent of our (Walker Environmental) customers are in compliance with pump-out frequency and FOG levels.
- Suspended traps are a major headache. How are these getting approved?
- Worksafe requires a platform for work 10 feet off the ground. Platform can cost \$25-50k
- Undersizing is a huge issue: 80% have 50gpm capacity.
- There is a big misconception that there is retroactivity / grandfathering in the bylaw
- Rules need to be enforced at City level
- There is not much grease in mop sinks - a trap dedicated to mop sink is not necessary (minimal grease)
- If premises have two grease traps – do they both need to be emptied/serviced at the same frequency?
- Coffee shops are a big customer [for one participant] – they are very good at cleaning frequencies – sometimes every two weeks
- Grease traps in coffee shops can smell bad – and attract a lot of fruit flies
- In Toronto, they have gone to one-month clean-out frequency (CSA recommends monthly).
- It is hard to put all FSEs on the same pump-out frequency (they generate varying amounts of FOG)

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## Topic 2

What challenges do you encounter when servicing grease interceptors?

How do you determine the amount of grease in the interceptor?

What kind of report or information do you provide to customers?

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- Some interceptors are so poorly installed that there is no space to clean them out. Have to service some from the side as there is not clearance under the sink
  - Utilize a portable Vac affixed to a person's back for grease interceptors in high-rise buildings (e.g. malls, hospitals, care facilities).
  - We charge more for high-rise and portable vac service because it extends the job. The job can be evaluated in two ways: volume of grease to haul and time to properly collect grease.
  - Main elements of cost are volume of grease, job time and additional help required (e.g. suspended traps)
  - Noted that other grease removal devices are ineffective.
  - Are repairs within the scope of the bylaw?
  - Can we repair older grease traps?
  - What expectations are there around reporting? What do we need to provide?
  - What do we do with remote tanks? Visual assessment is not possible.
  - Significant issue is the improper installation of grease interceptors with no space to access the unit. Plumbers focus on their sole objective and are not worried about accessibility.
  - Develop and distribute a standard form. It will benefit all stakeholders involved.
  - Pump services are being done by remote ports more frequently, for instance, grease interceptors installed 25ft in the air and inaccessible with no work safe regulation.
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## Topic 3

How and where do you dispose of grease collected?

What challenges, if any, do you encounter with disposal?

Does your operation have the capacity to handle larger quantities of grease or more customers?

If potential quantities were to increase would there be a capacity issue?

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- Starting to see product from other districts with different regulations around grease collection (Kelowna, Kamloops). How many other companies are going outside of Metro Vancouver and trucking grease back for processing?
- Is Metro Vancouver able to absorb that capacity from other jurisdictions?
- For installations or replacements due to sizing, do we consult with Metro Vancouver to make sure it meets requirements?
- Most hauler operators like the "Green Turtles". Generally, they work.
- Plastic grease interceptors are easier to clean, and they don't rust. However, the metal grease interceptors are cheaper.

- The biggest challenges are sizing issues. CSA only approves grease interceptors up to 100 gpm, how can Metro Vancouver state all fixtures need to be tied into a 150 gpm?
- One hauler reported that when the trucked liquid waste facility at Iona Wastewater Treatment Plant was down for a week, business operations had to close with nowhere to haul grease.
- There should be a backup system in addition to Iona and Annacis facilities to prevent service disruption. There is a lot of construction at both facilities.
- Update payment methods accepted at Iona and Annacis facilities. Currently they only have the ability to accept cheque method. The late payment form accepts credit card, making it so much easier to pay.
- Participants indicated they had the capacity to deal with an increase in grease and customers.
- One participant noted hiring technicians and labour is a challenge that could contribute to service provider capacity issues.
- Metal grease interceptor will rust in five years, but is much cheaper for restaurant owners.
- Is a plumbing permit required to replace an existing grease interceptor?

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#### **Topic 4**

Do you provide information or educational materials to your customers?

Are there educational materials that Metro Vancouver could provide that would help your staff?

Are there educational materials that MV could provide that would help your customers?

Do you experience language barriers with your customers?

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- Clients always ask, "Is it full?" No understanding on the side of food service establishments of how grease interceptors operate. It is always full – it depends on what it is full of. Knowledge of the mechanics of how it works is lacking at the food service establishment level.
- Customers want to see pictures that will help explain how a grease interceptor works.
- Challenge of getting materials into the right person's hands. The best time is when haulers are doing their work because the grease interceptor is actively being worked on. Flyers are being included in new builds; develop "Tips & Tricks" material – wiping, strainers to keep fats, oils and grease out.
- One challenge is that the flyers are not in multiple languages. Often, in food service establishments English is not their first language.
- There remains a big problem with usage of enzymes in grease interceptors (hospitals). There needs to be education material on not using enzymes; both informing that they are not allowed and why.
- Don't encounter food grinders very often.



## 6. Next Steps

Metro Vancouver will analyze all questions and comments from the small group meetings and identify key themes to inform the development of discussion topics for the Working Group, which will meet 5-6 times in 2019. Metro Vancouver will recruit Working Group members from the varied stakeholder groups that participated in the Small Group Meetings. The Working Group will be guided by a Terms of Reference.



*Meeting concluded at 2:54 p.m.*