

# Small Group Meeting Summary: Small & Medium Food Sector Establishments

## Food Sector Grease Interceptor Bylaw Review

Meeting Date: September 24, 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

Small & Medium Food Sector Establishments

### **Date & Location**

Monday, September 24, 9:00 a.m. – 10:45 a.m.

Metro Vancouver – 28th Floor Committee Meeting Room  
Metrotower Office Complex  
4730 Kingsway  
Burnaby

## Participants

NAME	ORGANIZATION
Ellson Wang	Y Sushi
Geoff Maunder	Maintenance Supervisor, Granville Island
Matt Choquette	Owner, Beatniks Restaurant
Michael Couleis	Executive Chef, The Arbutus Club
Glenn Saunders	Owner, Number e Foods
Singh Dillon	Old Tandoori King

## Presenters & Support

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

## 4. Presentation

Metro Vancouver presented the following to provide context for the bylaw review:

### Engagement Process – Tom Sadleir

- Purpose of the bylaw review
- Engagement objectives
- Timeline

### Background – Linda Parkinson

- Metro Vancouver management of the region’s wastewater
- Metro Vancouver’s Source Control Program
- 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:

What concerns or questions do you have about the current bylaw?

What solutions and ideas do you have to keep fats, oils and grease out of the sewer system?

Have you encountered solutions and ideas elsewhere, to keep fats, oils and grease out of the sewer system?

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- A lot of restaurants in the area don’t have grease interceptors; is Metro Vancouver aware of this?
- What is your largest non-compliance issue?
- How do we know haulers are not illegally dumping and are being monitored properly?
- How does Metro Vancouver regulate / enforce where grease from interceptors goes?
- Are there enough haulers / service providers to meet demand?
- Does Metro Vancouver monitor the larger food service businesses (e.g. McDonalds)? Are they being monitored properly?
- Have been informed that the US is using chemicals to breakdown grease.
- How often are sewer systems maintained?
- Garburators should be banned
- Are there any incentive programs to upgrade grease interceptors?
- There should be a fee to pay if you don’t have a Grease Interceptor (“polluter pays”)
- We are cleaning out regularly; restaurants in business for years are the ones not in compliance.

- We are educating staff to know what's going down the sink.
- Bylaw resulted in increased frequency of pump outs. From cleaning grease interceptor twice a year to four times.
- Issues with maintenance companies causing damage to grease interceptors and not properly maintaining equipment or reconnecting grease interceptor.
- High installation costs associated with grease interceptors when restaurant is on a concrete slab.
- Bottom line is important for small independent restaurants. For small restaurants it costs a lot of money to install a grease interceptor; if incentives exist it could increase compliance.

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**Topic 2:**

What is special or unique about your business and sector?

What would make it easier for you to be compliant and keep fats, oil and grease out of the sewer system?

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- How do other cities approach their grease interceptor regulations (New York, Los Angeles, Seattle)?
- Is Metro Vancouver positive that grease interceptors work? Have tests been conducted?
- Is there any type of cooking oil that is better to use?
- Is it possible to install Interceptors between restaurants and sewer?
- Do you know the areas where there is a lot more grease in the system?
- Is there the possibility to implement different regulations for different restaurants? Based on types of equipment, volumes, food types?
- Are there concessions within the bylaw for seasonal businesses?
- Would the presence of filtering systems in sinks be of benefit for preventing fats, oils and grease from ever entering the system?
- Is there the potential to add a large Grease Interceptor for multiple food service establishments? Rather than each individual food service establishments having their own.
- Installing alarms or indicators to gauge levels of grease would be beneficial for restaurants, so they could schedule pump outs when required, rather than on a calendar schedule.
- Inconvenience of disposing grease; young workers need to walk to [yellow] grease bin, exposed to elements; busy work schedule increases carelessness.
- Issue with high volume of people and high overturn of industry staff.
- Lack of time to instruct and educate workforce.
- Has been industry practice for decades to never put grease down the sink.
- Option to have larger interceptor run by city and impose a region tax or charge.

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**Topic 3:**

What more can Metro Vancouver be doing to help with education and awareness?

Do you have ideas for training and education tools?

What else might help?

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- Is there anything that restaurants can do at the source to help with disposal?
- Is the disposal of fats, oils and grease emphasized in the Food Safe course?
- Are grease interceptors included in health inspector reviews?

- When you have a concrete slab, with no basement, how do you install them?
- Is there a way to implement a “polluter-pay” system? Like BC Hydro’s power factor charge.
- Reinforce the basics to a young workforce of what should and shouldn’t go in the drain and what is considered fats, oils & grease; capitalize on generational trend of younger workforce to not harm the environment.
- Include requirement for annual certification.
- Provide an annual free regulatory course that instructs workers on fats, oils & grease (like Workplace Hazardous Materials Information System).
- Provide specific signage that outlines clearly where and how fats, oils & grease are to be disposed of.
- Complaints about mop water being poured in to storm drains – educate staff.
- Provide more education materials clearly identifying what constitutes fats, oils & grease and proper disposal methods.
- With any changes to regulations there must be education and explanation, e.g. outreach done by haulers (private) when organics ban came out.
- Input comes from engineer to the sizing requirements for the grease interceptor, not plumber.
- Emerging take-out culture contribute to fats, oils & grease entering the system
- Target residential disposal of wastewater.
- Churches, firehalls, community centres may not have grease interceptors.

## 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.

