American Water Newsroom

Illinois American Water Wants Customers to Pause and Think Before Pouring Fats, Oils and Grease Down the Kitchen Sink

As families prepare for holiday gatherings, the company reminds customers that proper kitchen cleanup can help prevent costly clogs and sewer backups

BELLEVILLE, Ill., Nov. 16, 2026 /PRNewswire/ -- As families across Illinois prepare for holiday meals and gatherings, Illinois American Water is encouraging customers to take a few simple precautions in the kitchen to help prevent clogged drains and sewer backups.

From cooking Thanksgiving dinner to cleaning up after festive gatherings, holiday meals can produce large amounts of fats, oils and grease (FOGs). When poured down the drain, these materials can cool, solidify and accumulate inside pipes, creating blockages that may lead to costly plumbing repairs and wastewater system issues.

"Holiday gatherings bring people together, and the last thing anyone wants is a plumbing problem interrupting the celebration," **says Brian Eisenloeffel, President, Illinois American Water.** "Keeping fats, oils and grease out of drains is a simple way customers and the general public can protect their pipes and help keep our local wastewater systems running smoothly. A little extra care during holiday cleanup can make a long-term difference for our customers and communities."

Simple Ways to Protect Your Pipes This Holiday Season

Illinois American Water encourages customers to keep these tips in mind while cooking and cleaning up:

- **Keep grease out of the drain.** Allow FOGs to cool, then collect them in a sealable container for proper disposal rather than pouring them down the sink.
- **Wipe before you wash.** Use a paper towel to remove excess grease from pots, pans and dishes before rinsing or placing them in the dishwasher.
- **Scrape food scraps into the trash.** Keep leftover food, sauces and other solids out of the drain, even when using a garbage disposal.
- **Use sink strainers.** Catch food particles before they enter the plumbing system and dispose of them in the trash.
- **Remember that hot water isn't a fix.** Running hot water or using dish soap does not eliminate grease buildup. FOG can cool and accumulate farther down the pipes.

These small changes can help homeowners avoid unexpected plumbing problems while reducing the risk of blockages in local wastewater infrastructure.

For a quick visual guide, American Water has created a short video featuring easy, practical tips for keeping fats, oils and grease out of household drains. Watch the video here.

About American Water
American Water (NYSE: AWK) is the largest regulated water and wastewater utility company in the United States. With a history dating back to 1886 and celebrating 140 years in 2026, We Keep Life Flowing® by providing safe, clean, reliable and affordable drinking water and wastewater services to approximately 14 million people with regulated operations in 14 states and on 19 military installations. American Water's approximately 7,000 talented professionals leverage their significant expertise and the company's national size and scale to achieve excellent outcomes for the benefit of customers, employees, investors and other stakeholders.

For more information, visit amwater.com and join American Water on LinkedIn, Facebook, X and Instagram.

About Illinois American Water
Illinois American Water, a subsidiary of American Water (NYSE: AWK), is the largest regulated water utility in the

state with approximately 600 dedicated employees working to provide safe, clean, reliable and affordable water and wastewater services to approximately 1.3 million people. American Water also operates a quality control and research laboratory in Belleville.

SOURCE American Water

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