American Water Newsroom

Pause and Think Before You Put It Down the Kitchen Sink

American Water offers simple steps this holiday season to keep fats, oils and grease out of drains to help avoid unexpected plumbing problems

CAMDEN, N.J., Nov. 16, 2026 /PRNewswire/ -- With holiday cooking and entertaining in full swing, American Water (NYSE: AWK), the largest regulated water and wastewater utility in the U.S., is reminding customers to pause and think before you put it down the kitchen sink. From food prep to cleanup, some everyday kitchen habits can contribute to clogged pipes and sewer backups.

Fats, oils and grease (FOGs), commonly found in cooking oils, butter, meat drippings, sauces and other holiday staples, can accumulate inside pipes when washed down the drain. Over time, these materials can harden and restrict wastewater flow, potentially leading to costly plumbing problems for homeowners and disruptions to wastewater systems.

"The holidays should be about spending time with family and friends, not dealing with unexpected plumbing problems," said, **Mike Doran, SVP, Deputy Chief Operating Officer & Chief Health and Safety Officer, American Water**. "How we handle kitchen cleanup can help protect household plumbing and the wastewater systems our communities rely on."

Simple Tips for a Clog-Free Holiday Season
American Water encourages home cooks to follow these easy steps when preparing and cleaning up after holiday meals:

- **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.

To help make holiday cleanup easier, American Water is highlighting practical ways to prevent fats, oils and grease from entering household drains in a video here.

By taking a few simple precautions, customers can help prevent household plumbing issues while supporting the reliability of local wastewater systems. For more information and additional water and wastewater tips, visit American Water.

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.

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