American Water Newsroom

Don't Let Grease Clog Up Your Holiday Plans

New Jersey American Water offers simple tips to help customers protect their pipes and avoid unexpected plumbing costs

CAMDEN, N.J., Nov. 17, 2026 /PRNewswire/ -- For many families, the holidays mean gathering around the table, sharing favorite meals and spending time together. But all that extra cooking can also put household plumbing to the test. As households across the Garden State prepare for holiday meals and gatherings, New Jersey American Water is reminding customers to keep fats, oils and grease, commonly known as FOGs, out of kitchen drains.

Cooking oils, butter, shortening, meat drippings, sauces and other greasy foods may go down the drain as liquids, but they can cool, harden and build up inside pipes. Over time, that buildup can restrict the flow of wastewater and lead to clogged drains, sewer backups and costly repairs. Hot water, dish soap and garbage disposals do not eliminate grease and may simply carry it farther into the plumbing system before it solidifies.

"No one wants a plumbing problem interrupting a holiday gathering, but what goes down the drain can have an impact well beyond the kitchen sink," said **Michelle Mancuso, senior manager of wastewater operations for American Water**. "Fats, oils and grease can build up in household plumbing and farther along in the wastewater system, where they can contribute to blockages. Keeping grease out of the drain helps protect customers' plumbing while preventing buildup that can create even bigger problems throughout the wastewater system."

Simple Ways to Protect Your Pipes

New Jersey American Water encourages customers to follow these tips while cooking and cleaning:

- **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 customers avoid disruptive and expensive plumbing problems while reducing the risk of blockages within local wastewater systems.

For a quick visual guide, watch American Water's short video featuring practical tips for keeping fats, oils and grease out of household drains. Watch the video here or visit youtu.be/gY-H63SyhLg.

Unexpected plumbing repairs can be especially difficult at a time when many households are already managing higher everyday expenses. Properly disposing of fats, oils and grease is one simple way customers can help avoid preventable plumbing costs. For customers who may also need help with their water or wastewater bill, New Jersey American Water offers financial assistance through its **H2O Help to Others Program™**. Learn more about available assistance and eligibility at newjerseyamwater.com/h2oprogram.

A little extra care in the kitchen can go a long way this holiday season, helping customers protect their homes, avoid unnecessary expenses and keep local wastewater systems flowing reliably.

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.

AboutNew Jersey American Water
New Jersey American Water,a subsidiary of American Water (NYSE: AWK),is the largestregulatedwater utility in the statewithapproximately875dedicated employees working toprovidesafe, clean,reliableand affordablewaterandwastewater servicesto approximately3million people. For more information, visit www.newjerseyamwater.com and follow New Jersey American Water on LinkedIn, Facebook, X, and Instagram.

For further information: Damarah Brown, Sr. External Affairs Specialist, New Jersey American Water, Damarah.Brown@amwater.com

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