

Scottish Water warn against blocking drains this Christmas

Scottish Water work year round to keep our water and drainage systems working, and here they warn against pouring fat down the sink this Christmas.

Fats, oils and grease poured down the sink or drain can build up and cause blockages and 'fatbergs' in drains and sewer pipes.

These prevent the waste water draining away properly and can cause unpleasant internal sewage flooding or pollute local rivers, coastal waters and beaches. .



Scottish Water encourages you to help keep the water cycle going by disposing of cooking fats, oils and grease responsibly during the festive season and beyond when cooking roast potatoes, basted birds and meat and pigs-in-blankets..

Scottish Water's advice for disposing of cooking fats, oils and grease responsibly is simple:

Leave to cool.

If you have a food waste recycling bin, scrape the cooled fat, oil or grease into your food waste bin.

**Please check with your local council, waste/oil recycling site or waste contractor for information on how to recycle or dispose of used fat, oil and grease in your area.*

If you don't have food waste recycling, put the cooled fat, oil or grease in to a sealable container (such as an empty

jar) and put it in the bin.

Some other top tips are:

Wipe things such as greasy baking trays and frying pans, after cooking, with kitchen roll to mop up excess fats, oils and grease.

To cool fat, oil or grease quickly in the kitchen for disposal, put in a container in the fridge. This also helps prevent smells.

Since Scottish Water's Keep the cycle running campaign started four years ago, the number of blockages in Scotland's drains and sewer network has reduced by 12% from almost 40,000 in 2013 to 35,208 in 2017 to the end of October.

However, this means that there are still almost 100 per day across Scotland and about 80% of them are caused by people putting the wrong things down their sinks and toilets.

Brian Lironi, Scottish Water's Director of External Communications, said: "Our campaign is working and has contributed to a sizeable reduction in the number of blocked drains and sewers across Scotland. We thank customers who have listened and taken time to think and act responsibly.

"However, there are still more than 35,000 blockages every year, most of which could be avoided if we all knew our kitchen and bathroom checklists and followed the simple advice in Scottish Water's campaign.

"The waste water drain which runs from your house to the public sewer is usually only about four inches wide, which is less than the diameter of a DVD.

"This drain is designed to take only the used water from sinks, showers and baths and pee, poo and toilet paper, the three p's, from the toilet. Scottish Water believes the best

way to tackle blocked drains and sewer flooding is to work with our customers to prevent blockages that can clog up the cycle in the first place.”



Fats, oil and grease in liquid form may not appear to be harmful but as it cools it congeals and hardens. This can then cause blockages to the inner lining of drainage pipes, which can lead to waste water flooding into gardens and properties, causing a health hazard to wildlife and the local environment. In extreme cases, blocked sewers can spill into burns, rivers, streams, coastal waters and beaches, causing environmental damage.

FATTY FACTS

- *Remember everything you put down your plugholes, toilets and drains will all end up in the drains and sewers.*
- *Fat blockages cause pollution, flooding, and public health hazards.*
- *Whether it is saturated fat (like lard), mono-unsaturated fat (like olive oil) or vegetable oil, they all congeal and harden.*
- *It is an offence under the Sewerage (Scotland) Act 1968 to interfere with the free flow of the sewers – fats, oils and grease do this when they congeal.*

Look out for Scottish Water’s TV, radio and social media adverts that will be shown from December 23 until Christmas Day to find out how to properly dispose of the cooking fat, oil and grease.

Customers can learn more about what they can do to keep the cycle running, what should and should not be poured down sinks and drains or flushed down toilets and simple ways they can save their drains, protect their homes, their neighbours’

homes and the local environment at www.scottishwater.co.uk/cycle.

To see Scottish Water's campaign TV adverts, visit Scottish Water's YouTube channel at www.youtube.com/scottishwaterfilm or visit our website.

For more information from Scottish Water visit www.scottishwater.co.uk/cycle. Follow them on Twitter @**scottish_water** and Facebook www.facebook.com/scottishwater.