



'Cease the Grease' aims to unclog drains, protect environment

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11/17/2014 - **KEESLER AIR FORCE BASE, Miss.** -- Keesler is fighting a battle against FOG - fats, oils and grease.

"Cease the Grease" kicked off on Earth Day in April to inform the Keesler community about the harmful effects of pouring grease and other hazardous materials down the drain. Partners in the campaign are the 81st Mission Support Group, 81st Infrastructure Division, base operating support, Zero Waste Solutions/Mark Dunning Industries and Forest City Housing.

Recycling used cooking oil and grease from fryers and cooking utensils keeps fats, oils and grease out of the base's sewer and storm drain systems. These oils coat pipelines much like fatty foods block human arteries and cause clogs when they harden as they pass from sink to sewer.



Cease the Grease

"All of our drains end in Biloxi's Back Bay, so it's very important that we think about what we are putting down both our household and outside drains," said Janet Lanier, the base's environmental manager.

"We've had significant sewer backup problems in our housing areas and dining facilities," civil engineering manager Don Kinman pointed out. "We've had several in which small amounts of raw sewage were actually running in the streets. This is not only a health concern, but it places Keesler at risk for possible fines from the state."

Canola, coconut, grapeseed, olive, palm, corn, peanut, soybean, safflower, sesame, sunflower and vegetable oils are "yellow oils" acceptable for recycling. About 100 gallons of used cooking oil have been collected so far.

Recycling project manager Doug Smith encourages housing residents and anyone interested in recycling household cooking oil to bring sealed containers to one of three base locations - the recycling center, the self-help center in Thrower Park housing area or the community center in Bay Ridge. Plastic gallon containers are available for oil collection at these sites.

"We're trying to make an extra push before Thanksgiving, since lots of people will be frying turkeys for their holiday meals," Smith pointed out.

"We've only received a few jugs, but it's picking up," said housing flight chief Brett Long. "The residents at our Sandhill Landing housing area in Gautier have expressed interest in the program."

Eventually, the base's recycled oil could provide financial benefits to the base. The used oil can be turned into bio-diesel, a cleaner alternative to diesel fuel.

For more information, call the recycling center, 228-377-4546; the environmental office, 228-377-1202, or the housing office, 228-374-5336.