Grease buildup on interior of sewer line

The Problem

Bacon frying, chickens roasting, ground beef and onions browning, are all signs and smells of a good restaurant. But just as our own arteries are at risk with a diet high in fat, sanitary sewer systems (SSS) are at risk for buildup and blockages with flows full of fats, oils and grease (FOG's). Cleaning methods in food service facilities cause FOG's to pass through sinks, dishwashers and drains, and travel downstream. If left unchecked, sewer blockages can occur causing major problems of raw sewage overflow. Each year, municipal sanitary sewers overflow on 40,000 occasions, dumping potentially deadly pathogens into the nation's streets, waterways, and beach areas. The EPA projects combined sewer overflows discharge 1.2 trillion gallons of sewage and storm water a year, enough to keep Niagara Falls roaring for 18 days.

Current Practice

Most "authorities having jurisdiction" (AHJ's) require some method to remove FOG's from the waste stream. This is usually done with large, outside (usually concrete) interceptors, or smaller indoor grease traps. Large outdoor interceptors have long retention times and are maintained by pumping from a service provider. There is a great deal of variation in design by jurisdiction, and sizing criteria is variable as well. Pumpouts are usually scheduled on a regular basis, sometimes dictated by the local jurisdiction. Usually this pumpout creates a paper trail that the local enforcement personnel can inspect to insure compliance. Large outdoor traps are also manually inspected using a "sludge judge" to monitor build up of solids and grease.