

Avoid the Greasy Stuff!

While preparing for your holiday dinner this year, remember not everything should go down the drain. Putting the wrong things down the drain can cause serious and expensive damage to your household plumbing system. You also don't want to spend your holidays trying to contact a plumber to unclog your drain while the dirty dishes pile up!

Many of us think that when we see something disappear it is gone for good – out of sight, out of mind! This type of thinking is especially harmful when it comes to our plumbing. Not everything is designed to go down the drain. Pouring the wrong thing into your kitchen sink will eventually mean that you have a big problem in your pipes, costing you a lot of time and money in order to fix the issue at hand.



There are a lot of materials that when poured down a drain will accumulate, clog pipes, and some will eventually corrode the joints, causing leaks and severe damage. The most common item is grease. This includes meat fats, lard, cooking oil, shortening, butter and margarine. Grease is a liquid that seems like it should go okay down the drain, but remember it is only a liquid while it is hot. As soon as grease cools down, it will begin to form into a solid. As it sits in your pipes it catches other particles, and eventually plugs up your system. It may also start to smell! Running hot water as you pour grease down the drain will not help and home garbage disposals won't keep grease out of your plumbing system either. These units only shred solid material into smaller pieces but do not prevent grease from going down the drain.

While it's safe to run hot water from the sink through the garbage disposal, it's best to use cold water when you are operating the disposal. Using a strong flow of cold water and keeping the disposal running at least 30 seconds after grinding has stopped helps flush food particles through the drain line. Cold water will solidify any excess fatty and greasy waste so it is chopped up and flushed down the drain, however, the best way to dispose of grease is to avoid putting it down the drain to begin with, and instead, put it into a container to harden and then throw it away in the trash.

If you do end up with a clogged drain this holiday season and are planning on fixing it on your own using liquid drain cleaners, avoid chemical drain cleaners. Most drain chemicals are very toxic in nature and not a good thing to keep around the home if you have children or pets. (Note: By putting them down the drain you'll also be contributing to global pollution!)

Chemical drain cleaners can have a negative effect on your piping. Over time these chemicals may deteriorate your pipes from the inside out. When this happens, the drain line(s) will have to be replaced. Don't confuse toxic drain cleaners with the various drain care products that are on the market today. These products contain "friendly" bacteria and enzymes. They work great to keep any drain sludge and grease from building up in the pipes.

So, remember while you are cooking your holiday dinner, don't put any grease down the drain. Instead scrape food off plates into the garbage and let grease solidify into a container before disposing of it into the trashcan. A moment of convenience is not worth the cost of repairs down the road!

Sources: www.bayonet-inc.com
www.getwithgreen.com
www.todaysmodernwoman.com
<http://lesstoxicguide.ca>