



## **2001 Trade Waste Bylaw – Food Premises**

The Central Otago District Council Trade Waste Bylaw came into effect on 1 September 2001. The Bylaw applies to all food business premises that discharge wastewater to the Council sewer.

Any facility that is used for the preparation of is likely to be discharging trade waste.

The bylaw protects the wastewater system from any harmful trade wastes and ensures that the best quality of effluent is discharged to the environment from the wastewater system. Harmful wastewater is any wastewater containing substances that are difficult to treat, may cause blockages in the sewage collection system, may be hazardous to staff operating the collection and treatment system, or may harm the environment. Trade waste does not include ordinary domestic sewage.

### **Wastewater from Food Premises**

Wastewater from food premises usually contains quantities of solids, greases, fats and oils. The combination of wastewater from a number of premises can cause problems such as blockages, treatment problems, hazards to public health and possible pollution of the environment.

### **Grease Traps**

The most common way of treating such waste before it enters the collection system is by using a grease trap. Grease traps come in a number of forms. The most common one being a pre-cast concrete unit made up of two chambers. In the first chamber the oils and grease rise to the top, and the solids settle to the bottom. The settled wastewater passes through a second chamber before flowing into the public sewer. In order for a grease trap to operate effectively and efficiently, it must be cleaned regularly. The intervals between cleaning will depend on the size of the chambers and the volume of wastewater leaving the premises.

There are other types of grease traps that may be used were space is an issue. These grease traps are usually treated with chemicals to reduce the frequency of cleaning.

If you currently operate a food premise and don't have an effective grease trap, you will need to get one installed by a registered drain-layer. All grease traps must have a building consent prior to installation.

## **Grease Trap Care and Maintenance**

Regular cleaning of your grease trap is essential to avoid blockage and overflows, fats and greases bypassing to the public sewer, or offensive odours.

Grease Trap cleaning is carried out by septic tank cleaning contractors, who may be found in the Telephone Directory. It is advisable to have a formal contract for regular cleaning of your grease trap. You should also check that your contractor is disposing of the cleanings legally and responsibly. You don't want to be moving the problem to somewhere else.

You can extend the times between grease trap cleaning by observing some simple good housekeeping tips:

- Scrape solids of utensils and dishes before cleaning to reduce the amount of solids going into the wastewater; i.e. dispose of the waste as solid waste.
- Dispose of waste cooking oil and grease separately, i.e. not down the drain. Your waste oil may be suitable for recycling.
- Don't use more oil or fat for cooking than you need to.
- Use aluminum foil on stovetops and around fryers to collect spills. Change foil regularly.
- Install a screen or strainer on your waste outlet, and clean it regularly.
- Avoid excessive usage of detergents.

After the grease trap has been cleaned, refill it with cold water to ensure that it works properly. This can be done by running the cold tap in the sink until the trap is full.

## **Trade Waste Consents**

Any business that discharges any of the kinds of wastes identified in the Bylaw must obtain a Trade Waste Consent as set out in the Bylaw. Businesses that discharge condensing or cooling water, stormwater or domestic sewage do not require a trade waste consent.

Any existing business that alters the processes being carried out, or sells or ceases the activity, must seek advise on whether a new trade waste consent or a change to the existing consent is required.

Under the Bylaw, the operators of existing premises must have made an application for a Trade Waste Discharge Consent by 30 July 2002. New businesses must apply before they commence operation.

The application process for food premises is relatively straightforward. The application forms are set out in two parts. There is a general section that includes the details of the site, and a general description of the activity undertaken. The second part requests further details of the site and the processes carried out. This form is entitled "Description of Trade Waste and Premises". For most food premises only the first part of this form needs to be completed.

The description part must include information about any on-site treatment facilities you have such as grease traps, garbage grinders, screens, or settling tanks. Include with this a description of your cleaning and maintenance programme.

Applications for a Trade Waste Consent must include an application fee of \$150.00 including GST. Applications that take longer than 1½hours to process will be charged for the additional time at actual cost. Note that most consents for food premises do not exceed 1½hours.

### **What if I don't comply with the Bylaw?**

You will be visited by the Council's Trade Waste Consent Advisor, who will inspect the premises to determine whether a consent is required. If your premises create a health nuisance or a blockage to the public sewer, you may be charged for the cost of repair.