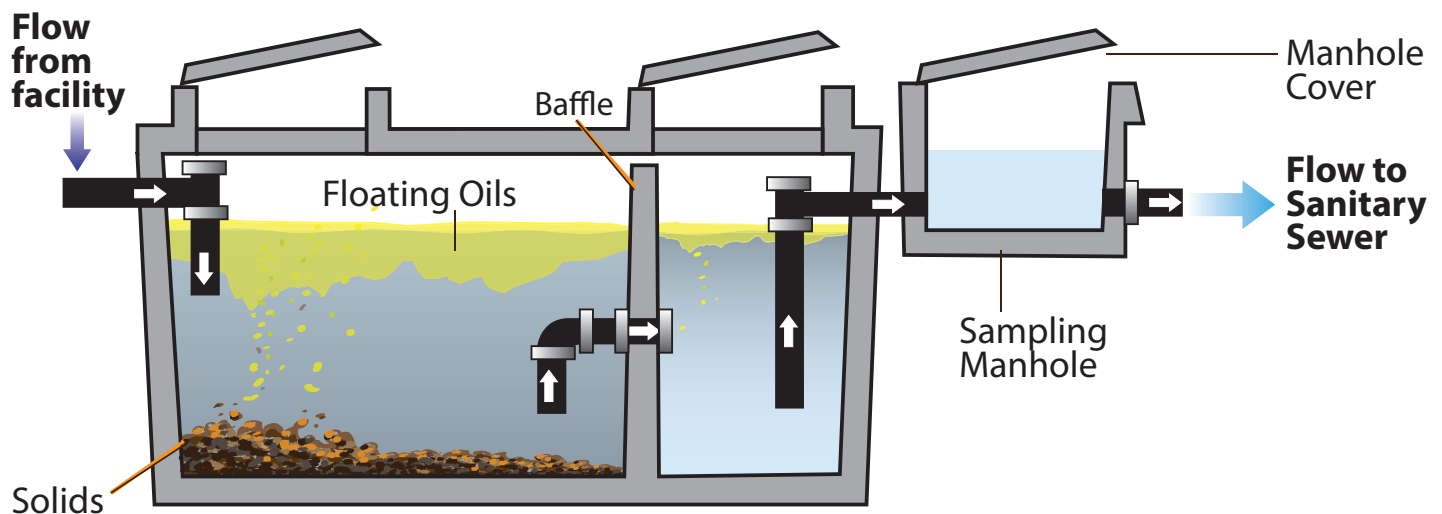




# Sand/Oil Interceptor Maintenance

## What is a Sand/Oil Interceptor?

Sand/oil interceptors are large capacity, underground vaults installed between sewer drains and the Central Contra Costa Sanitary District's main sewer line. These vaults are designed with baffles and pipes to trap sediments and retain floating oils. The large capacity of the vaults slows down the wastewater, allowing oil to float to the surface and solid material to settle at the bottom of the vault.



## How do I know when a Sand/Oil Interceptor needs to be maintained or cleaned?

Like any filtration system, a sand/oil interceptor needs to be maintained and cleaned on a regular basis. Just because a sand/oil interceptor is still draining, it may not be functioning at its design capacity. The separation efficiency of the interceptor is affected by the accumulation of settled solids or sludge on the bottom of the separator, and by oils floating on the water surface. The District requires that a sand/oil interceptor be cleaned every 90 days or when the combined oil and sludge reaches 25% of the unit's capacity.

## Who do I call to pump out and clean the interceptor?

Licensed Hazardous Waste Transporters/Recyclers are the typical companies that can pump out and clean your interceptor. These companies have special vacuum trucks that pump out most materials that accumulate in sand/oil interceptors. The waste is shipped to a licensed treatment facility where the oils, solids, and heavy metals are treated. You can get a list of licensed waste haulers from the District's website or by contacting an Environmental Compliance Inspector in your area.

## What should not go down the drain and into an interceptor?

- Degreasers and concentrated detergents can emulsify (break up) oil into small droplets so the oil does not float to the surface within the interceptor.
  - Fuels, alcohols, or solvents are prohibited from being discharged to sanitary sewer drains. Discharge of large quantities can create explosion hazards in the on-site interceptor, and/or District sanitary sewer system (e.g., underground pipes in streets, pumping stations, the treatment plant).
  - Concentrated amounts of oily products will decrease the effectiveness of the interceptor and require more frequent cleanings.
  - Antifreeze, brake, transmission, power steering fluids, paints, and heavy metal-bearing wastewater are not treated by an interceptor. These types of discharges are typically hazardous waste and must be handled and disposed of accordingly.
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## What are the Best Management Practices (BMPs) that can help keep an interceptor properly working?

- Interceptors shall be cleaned at least once every 90 days by a Licensed Hazardous Waste Transporter/Recycler or more often as necessary.
- Decanting is not permitted. Sand/oil and other waste that has been removed from the interceptor should not be introduced back into the interceptor or any drain, sewer, storm drain, or natural body of water.
- Inspect the interceptor after cleaning to make certain that the inlet and outlet pipes are not damaged and are clear of obstructions.
- Save maintenance costs by preventing oils and sludge from entering the interceptor by using methods such as sweeping sand and sediments from the floor to reduce potential discharge to the interceptor.
- Use drip pans and oil absorbent materials to reduce the amount of oil/grease entering the interceptor.
- Do not pour wastes directly into the interceptor. An interceptor is not a disposal device.
- Do not store antifreeze, degreasers, solvents, gasoline, and other chemicals near any drains including sewer drains, storm drains, or drains connected to an interceptor.
- All maintenance records of the sand/oil interceptor are required to be kept on-site for a minimum of three years. These records will be reviewed during facility inspections completed by the District's Environmental Compliance Inspectors.

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## ABOUT THIS FACT SHEET

This fact sheet is one of a series created by the Environmental Compliance section to help businesses understand why and how to prevent water pollution. The contents are informational and summary in nature and do not constitute legal advice. For more information, call CCCSD's Environmental Compliance section at (925) 229-7288 or visit [www.centrialsan.org](http://www.centrialsan.org)