

Issue #8

Fall 2022

News + Updates



The 29th annual Pacific Northwest Pretreatment Workshop was recently hosted by Western States Alliance (WSA). We were back in person once again at the Heathman Lodge in Vancouver, Washington. We had a great turnout with 18 presenters covering diverse topics ranging from regulatory updates to cutting edge new technology. Thank you to all who joined us. We hope you learned a lot, went back to work with great new ideas, and are planning on joining us again next year.

For those of you unable to attend, or if you did and want to review your favorite presentations, they are posted on our website, linked below.

[2022 PNPW Presentations](#)



Join us at P2 West!

Our next conference, **P2 West: EPA Region 9 & Region 10 Pollution Prevention Roundtable**, will take place October 18 – 20, 2022, in Portland, Oregon. The premier annual Pollution Prevention conference of technical assistance providers, green business programs, sustainability experts, and zero waste and pretreatment professionals working with businesses and industry to reduce pollution.

[Visit the Event Page & Register Here](#)

New FOG Trainings Coming Soon

PPRC has been funded by the USDA to provide additional FOG and “emerging issues” trainings to pre-treatment programs. If you are interested in attending or hosting free in-person training please let us know.

Contact Jean Waters at jwaters@pprc.org if you have any questions or would like additional information.

Check Out Our New Websites

[PPRC.org](http://pprc.org) and westernstatesalliance.org have both been redesigned and we couldn't be more excited to share them with you. Click on the links above to explore the new websites and see what they have to offer.

Highlights include improved event page interactions, a dynamic technical resource library, and much more!

PFAS & Biosolids

One of the big topics of discussion at the recent Pacific Northwest Pretreatment Workshop was PFAS. What are they exactly? What are the concerns associated with PFAS? How do they effect pre-treatment programs and waste water treatment plant (WWTP) operations?



Per-and Polyfluoroalkyl Substances (PFAS) are fluorinated chemicals with many uses and unique properties. They are stain repellent, flame resistant, non-stick, water resistant and good for coatings. Major PFAS sources include industrial sites, military fire training areas, and airports. They can also be found in to-go containers, personal care products, raincoats, electronics, and non-stick cookware.

What's the big deal?? *PFAS are everywhere*

PFAS have been linked to adverse health effects including: difficulty becoming pregnant, chronic kidney disease, cardiovascular disease, osteoarthritis, altered liver function, decreased vaccine effectiveness, and cancer.

Rashi Gupta, Biosolids Technology Integration Lead with Carollo Engineers, is researching the issue of PFAS in biosolids. Click the link below to read more about the research and Rashi's suggestions for pretreatment professionals and agencies.

[Read the Full Article Here](#)

FOG Program Case Study: Rochester, MN

Your mission, should you decide to accept it, is to create a FOG program. From scratch. By yourself. For 400+ FSEs in the jurisdiction...

Sound daunting? This is the mission that Chelsea Weigand was given and accepted in 2017 when she began working as an Industrial and Commercial Waste Compliance Specialist with City of Rochester Public Works in Rochester, MN. The jurisdiction wanted to move from being reactive to being proactive. They already had many sewer blockages and had identified "FOG lines" that had to be cleaned often. But they were only achieving short-term improvements because they didn't know all the food service establishments (FSEs), whether they had grease interceptors, and could only conduct a handful of inspections annually.

Communication Among Departments Is Key!

Chelsea identifies that communication with the County Public Health Department, the Plan Review Staff, and Building Safety/Plumbing inspectors is vital to the success of the FOG program. The Health Department inspects the FSEs more often than the FOG department. It's important for the Health Inspectors to know about FOG, what to look for, and why it's important to the public works department but also to the health requirements for the FSE. Chelsea is invited annually to Health



Department staff meetings to present about FOG. This educates new staff and re-establishes relationships between Chelsea and other inspectors. The Planning staff notify Chelsea of proposed FSEs and they notify the FSE of FOG Requirements. The Building Safety/Plumbing inspectors work through the logistics of installing grease interceptors. Another important partner is the collections crew in the public works department. They notify Chelsea when FOG is observed, send pictures, and track FOG problem areas in ElementsXS and GIS.

Progress

There has been substantial progress in the FOG program in Rochester since 2017. They've made changes to their ordinance:

- Food grinders (garbage disposals) are prohibited in new construction with hydromechanical grease interceptors
- Change in FSE ownership triggers FSE FOG compliance
- An exemption for "physical constraints" was added but the FSE pays a surcharge
- Gravity Grease Interceptors material must be "concrete with admixtures an/or coatings"

They continue to evaluate the ordinance annually and get input from other departments.

Average yearly sewer call-outs decreased from five/year to 1 or 2/year. FOG is now being hauled to the treatment plant headworks for treatment. This keeps it out of the lines. They've increased through the years from about 2,000 gallons per week to almost 6,000 gallons per week. The number of inspections increased from 92 in 2017 to 227 in 2021. There have been 67 interceptors installed in Rochester since 2017. 34 were in existing FSEs, 31 were in new FSEs, and two were in existing FSEs that replaced their grease interceptor.

Success and Future Plans

Chelsea is creating relationships with the FSEs now. She is able to educate them about their grease trap and why it's important to keep them clean so they don't have back-ups in their restaurant – not to mention the sewer line problems.

The city is considering getting a digester and feeding the FOG received along with high-strength waste. The city's IT department is working with the stormwater department to develop an electronic way to keep track of FOG work.

Pumpers are taking online training from the city and receiving certification. These pumpers have become the eyes and ears in the field and Chelsea has a good relationship with them. In fact, one has dubbed her the "Grease Bulldog." Sounds like a super-hero, don't you think?

Thank you to Chelsea for sharing her experience and expertise for this case study. Thanks also to the City of Rochester, Minnesota, Public Works, Environmental Services.

Special thanks to the USDA for funding our FOG abatement programming!



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