

"We Have
Tomorrow —
Bright Before
Us, Like A
Flame."

Langston Hughes



City of Lawrence

The Flame | November 2020

Pay heed this holiday season: Beware of the FOG

What do bacon, ice cream and creamy gravy have in common? They're more than just tasty treats. They're also sources of fats, oils and grease — also known as FOG.

While fats, oil and grease add flavor to your food, they can be a nuisance to our sewer collection system. Pouring FOG down the drain can leave a real mess in Lawrence sewers, ultimately impacting our streams.

FOG creates clogs that can back up sewage into your street, yard or home — and can even send it spilling into a neighborhood stream! If it can clog arteries in the body, then it will probably clog the sewer pipe.

In addition to the dangers in our sewers and the environment, reducing FOG also has cost-saving implications. A FOG backup can cause significant damage to your home if you have to go to the expense of replacing a sewer line. Clogs on private property are the property owner's responsibility.

While our residents should always be conscious of reducing FOG, the holidays are an especially dangerous time for fats, oils and grease to build up on our plates and in our pipes.

Fortunately, reducing FOG can be easy. As you're preparing and cleaning up after this year's family feasts, please keep these simple FOG reduction tips in mind.

- Before washing dishes, use a paper towel or a scraper to wipe away FOG. Dispose of it in the trash or compost.
- Put food scraps in the trash or compost bin, not through the garbage disposal. Use a sink strainer and/or mesh drain strainer to catch food scraps before they go into your drain.

- Pour liquid food scraps, e.g. sauces, milkshakes, etc., into a sealed container for disposal in the trash.
- Pour used oil into a container with a top (the original if available), so it can be reused, recycled or placed in the trash for disposal. Cooking oil can be recycled through the City of Lawrence Household Hazardous Waste Facility.
- Small amounts (less than one quart) of cooking oil can also be absorbed or frozen for trash disposal. Cat litter works well for absorbing cooking oil.

Consider this: If every person in Lawrence poured just one teaspoon of FOG down the drain, it would be the equivalent of dumping more than two 55-gallon drums of FOG into a sewer! If you saw that

happening, you would probably report it, and you definitely wouldn't want to be contributing to the problem. The fact is that most FOG-related overflows happen on residential lines, so these easy everyday tips will make a huge difference for our sewers.

You can also contribute to the FOG solution in our community by reporting any illegal dumping or spills immediately, educating your neighbors and others in your community, and looking into recycling your used cooking oil, which reduces the amount of waste that has to be disposed of in landfills.

For more information about FOG, please visit our website: lawrenceks.org/mso/fog. The website includes tips for residents as well as restaurants and businesses.



Contain, don't drain.

City info available online at lawrenceks.org and on cable Channel 25.

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LPRD following Smart & Safe Reopening Guidelines

Throughout the pandemic, the City of Lawrence Parks and Recreation Department has been working with Lawrence-Douglas County Public Health, Baldwin Recreation and the Eudora Parks and Recreation Department to formulate new recommendations for parks and recreation services during the pandemic. In October, the Lawrence Parks and Recreation Department announced they would be following the Smart & Safe Reopening Guidelines.

The Smart & Safe Reopening Guidelines use a four-color chart to indicate the status for the different activities and facilities open for public use. Each Thursday, the status will be updated to indicate the current risk level, using green, yellow, orange or red, based on the number of new cases and the percentage of positive COVID-19 tests. The system will mirror Lawrence-Douglas County Public Health recommendations for the Smart & Safe School Reopening Guidelines and Status for schools in Douglas County.

Each color category has guidelines for the type of activity that can be held at a location as well as any limitations to participation. These recommendations may also change as more information is learned about the pandemic and how it affects our community.



The current status will be posted to the LPRD web page: lawrenceks.org/lprd.

Please note that once open, masks will be required at all times for any person in a City of Lawrence parks and recreation facility. This will include when working out with weights and cardio equipment, as well as any class or activity. Touchless temperature checks will be available for everyone entering a facility.

Sports Pavilion Lawrence will use keycards for entry. All other facilities will have sign-in sheets, requiring name and phone number for any contact tracing that may need to occur.

Facility openings and modified hours will be posted on the LPRD web page in conjunction with the latest status updates. You can find that information at: lawrenceks.org/lprd.

PROTECT AGAINST PORCH PIRATES

The Lawrence Police Department is sharing a special safety alert for the holiday season. This time of year always brings an increase in package deliveries, which can also mean an increase in thefts.

Follow these tips to keep your treasures safe from "porch pirates" this year:

- Be home at the time you are expecting a package delivery.
- If you cannot be home, ask a neighbor to keep a look out for your packages.
- Have packages delivered to your place of work instead of your house.
- Place a hold on your mail or request a package pickup.
- Use an outdoor camera system — though this might not prevent thefts, it can help police capture the thieves.

Follow these tips to help make sure you can enjoy a holiday season that is merry and bright!



Emergency & furnace loans available

The City of Lawrence offers several grant and loan programs to assist income-eligible homeowners.

The emergency loan program provides up to \$5,000 for emergency repairs that either eliminate immediate hazards to health and safety or repair damage to a structure likely to cause health and safety hazards.

The City also offers a furnace loan program that can provide up to \$5,000 for the replacement or addition of an existing heating and/or cooling source with approved energy-efficient appliances.

Both programs require a zero interest, zero payment mortgage to be placed on the property. The loan amount is due in full when the applicant is no longer the owner/occupant.

For additional terms and conditions, you can contact City of Lawrence Community Development staff at (785) 832-7700 or visit our website: lawrenceks.org/pds/housing_programs. You can also download an application directly from that web page.

Winter Weather Season Reminders

You never know when winter weather is going to strike, so it's best to start your preparations early. The City of Lawrence has a number of programs and policies in place to help make the season go as smoothly as possible for residents.

Snow plowing operations are generally not effective if there are less than three inches of snow on the ground, and City crews will typically spread sand and salt on the roadways for icy conditions and small accumulations.

When snow does hit, City crews follow the snow removal policy and clear City streets in order from most to least traveled. You can view the route map, as well as live traffic cams, online: lawrenceks.org/snow

City crews aren't the only ones with some responsibility when it comes to clearing snow. City ordinance No. 8324 states that all property owners must clear their public sidewalks of snow and ice within 48 hours of a winter storm. This helps keep pathways safe for all Lawrence residents.

Economic Development Strategic Plan Update

The City of Lawrence and our project partners at Ernst & Young recently completed Phase One of the Economic Development Strategic Plan, which focused on understanding the City's current economic condition.

Phase One efforts culminated in an Economic Overview Report that includes observations on holistic elements of

Lawrence's economy, a SWOT analysis, an in-depth data appendix and a display of community survey responses to-date. Findings from the report will help the City and EY prioritize specific areas of Lawrence's economy during the rest of the strategic planning process.

You can read the report on our website: lawrenceks.org/ed/strategic-plan