



CITY OF SAN MATEO/ ESTERO MUNICIPAL IMPROVEMENT DISTRICT

DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS, REGULATORY COMPLIANCE DIVISION
1949 Pacific Blvd., San Mateo, CA 94403 Telephone: (650) 522-7300



INSTRUCTIONS FOR COMPLETING APPLICATION FOR WASTE DISCHARGE PERMIT (FOOD SERVICE FACILITY)

The numbers below correspond to the numbered sections on the Waste Discharge Permit Application form.

1. Business Name (Corporation): Provide the legal name of your business, as it appears on your business license.
2. "Doing Business As" (DBA) Name: Provide the customer-facing ('Doing Business As') name if different from the legal name (e.g., store front name).
3. Street Address: Provide the physical business address, including building numbers if applicable.
4. Business Phone: Provide the customer-facing phone number for the business's physical location.
5. Mailing Address: Provide if different from the physical address listed in Section 3.
6. Manager/Owner Name: Provide the first name, last name, title, phone number, and valid email of the person in charge of overall operations.
7. On-Site Contact Name: Provide the name, title, phone number, and valid email of the best local contact for this application or for emergencies (e.g., on-site manager).
8. Days of Operation: Indicate the days of the week the facility is open.
9. Meals Served During: Specify when meals are served (breakfast, lunch, dinner), this is just meant as a general time-frame of when the food is served.
10. Seating Capacity: Provide the total number of indoor and outdoor seats.
11. Estimated Meals Per Day: Estimate the average number of meals (or customers) served per day.
12. Establishment Classification: Check all categories that describe your business. Provide further detail in Section 13.
13. Description of Food Establishment: Describe the type of food service provided. Some examples include "Medieval Sushi Tavern serving raw fish on wooden shields" ... "Yoga Diner serving only stretch-inspired salads and meditation smoothies".
14. Grease Removal Device (GRD): Indicate whether or not a GRD is installed by checking Yes or No.
15. Number of GRDs: Indicate the total number of GRDs at the facility. If the number is greater than 4 you'll be asked to include the information for those GRD's at the bottom of the section.
16. GRD Type: Select the type of GRD. Common types include grease traps (small indoor units, often in the floor or under sinks) and interceptors (large underground outdoor units serving the entire kitchen). Automatic and hydromechanical traps are also used.
17. GRD Cleaning Frequency: State how often each GRD is serviced (e.g., every 2 weeks, monthly). GRD's must be cleaned frequently enough that they never accumulate more than 25% FOG (fats, oil, grease) of their designed capacity. Make sure the cleaning frequency you list is enough to meet this requirement.
18. GRD Size (gallons): Provide the capacity of each GRD in gallons. If unknown, provide dimensions (height x width x depth).
19. GRD Location: Explain the location of each GRD. If indoors, specify whether the unit is in the floor or above it and identify the nearby fixture. If outdoors, specify which side of the building it is near and any other important details related to its location or access.
20. Fixtures Connected to GRD: List all plumbing fixtures (sinks, floor drains, dishwashers, etc.) that drain to each GRD. Make sure to check all that apply unless it's the entire kitchen, then just marking "All Kitchen" is sufficient.
21. Waste Generation and Haulers: Indicate whether waste is generated from GRD cleaning or used cooking oil (22) disposal. For each, list the name of the pump service or waste hauler. Do not include solid waste collected by garbage service.

The application must be signed by the owner, corporate officer, general partner, or another authorized representative with decision-making authority. The signer is legally responsible for the accuracy of the information provided and liable for any future enforcement actions. Before signing, read the Terms and Conditions on the reverse side of the application, as the signature indicates agreement to comply.

Return the completed application at least 30 days before commencing discharge. If discharge has already begun, return the application within 10 business days (SMMC 7.38.220(c)).

CITY OF SAN MATEO / ESTERO MUNICIPAL IMPROVEMENT DISTRICT

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Who Needs a Waste Discharge Permit?

Any food store, eating place, or food preparer that bakes or cooks food on the premises must apply for a waste discharge permit.

Why these facilities?

Food service facilities commonly generate fat, oil, and grease (FOG) wastes in the cooking process. Wastewater from kitchen cleaning operations typically contains FOG wastes. FOG wastes can build up in the sewer system, and result in partial or total blockage of the sewer. Blockage can result in sewer backups and overflows.

Why a permit?

Federal and state regulations, as well as municipal preventive maintenance costs, are prompting an increased level of sewer system monitoring, maintenance, and recordkeeping. The City/District has found that while periodic inspection of commercial kitchens helps identify and correct problems, the message about effectively preventing FOG discharge into the sewer system is often lost over time. A permit provides the means to formally convey sewer discharge requirements and the consequences of failure to comply with the requirements. The permit also serves as ready reference to these requirements that can be referred to by facility management and staff at any time.

Doesn't the county health department already inspect for compliance with sewer discharge requirements?

No. The City has primary authority over use of the sewer system. The county environmental health inspector does not inspect sewer pretreatment systems for proper operation and maintenance. A county inspector will take action on a sewer issue if they determine that the public health is threatened.

What are the penalties for noncompliance?

A Notice of Violation (NOV) is issued if the noncompliance has likely not resulted in impairment to the sewer system, such as a recordkeeping issue. There is no fee or fine with the first NOV. An administrative citation may accompany the NOV for likely discharge of FOG to the sewer and for repeat violations. Follow-up inspection fees may also apply. There are other enforcement remedies available for chronic violations.

What does the permit cover?

The permit formally conveys the same items that have been and will be inspected by the City/District. These include pretreatment system maintenance procedures and maintenance records, and proper handling of pretreatment system waste. The inspector also inspects for records of cooking grease handling and disposal, and other practices that affect discharge of FOG into the sewer system.

What is a pretreatment system?

An under-counter grease trap and outdoor grease interceptor are examples of pretreatment systems. These are devices that are required to be installed on drain lines that may carry FOG wastes in the wastewater.

How do I know if I need to install or upgrade a pretreatment system?

At minimum, any kitchen utensil cleaning sink or wok range must drain through a pretreatment system. Pretreatment systems must conform to the Uniform Plumbing Code.

When can I anticipate an inspection?

The business will be inspected annually to assure compliance with permit requirements. The municipal code authorizes that inspections be conducted during normal business hours and may be unannounced.

Are there fees associated with the permit?

The City of San Mateo has an annual waste discharge permit fee. For Fiscal Year 2024-25, the fee was \$778.00. Foster City/Estero has adopted a similar fee. The fee recovers a portion of the cost of the program. Please submit payment upon receiving the annual invoice. How do I apply for the permit? The application for a waste discharge permit is enclosed. Please complete and return the application within 10 days of your receipt of the attached letter (or within 30 days if you have not yet begun discharging wastewater from your business). You will have an opportunity to go over any questions or concerns with the City/District staff.

Who do I talk to for information and assistance with this program?

Please contact the City of San Mateo Department of Public Works, Regulatory Compliance Division, at (650) 522-7300.

¿Preguntas? Para información en español, haga el favor de llamar al (650) 522-7300

有任何問題嗎？如需索取更進一步的中文資訊，請致電 650.522.7300