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NEW YORK CITY BUSINESS INTEGRITY COMMISSION, DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION, AND MAYOR'S OFFICE OF POLICY AND STRATEGIC PLANNING LAUNCH COMPREHENSIVE STRATEGY TO HELP BUSINESSES COMPLY WITH GREASE DISPOSAL REGULATIONS

Enforcement Effort Will Target Areas With Highest Concentration of Yellow Grease Production;

DEP Launches Educational Video for Restaurant Industry on Proper Grease Disposal

New York City Business Integrity Commission (BIC) Commissioner and Chair Shari C. Hyman and New York City Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) Commissioner Carter Strickland today launched a comprehensive strategy to ensure compliance with grease hauling and disposal regulations. The interagency effort combines two components: a joint task force composed of BIC enforcement agents and DEP inspectors, and a new DEP online video to educate the food service industry on how to keep grease, fats, and oils from entering the City's sewer system. BIC oversees the commercial hauling industry and has witnessed an increase in the unlicensed hauling of yellow grease, which can be used in the production of biodiesel fuels. DEP regulates the disposal of grease at restaurants, and inspectors routinely find sewer pipes clogged with hardened grease. This restricts the normal flow of wastewater from businesses and homes and can lead to flooding and sewer backups. Currently, improperly disposed-of grease accounts for 61% of sewer backups citywide. The Mayor's Office of Policy and Strategic Planning has determined areas for targeted enforcement through an analysis of grease disposal information and DEP sewer data, as well as license data from the Department of Health and Mental Hygiene. The task force will target areas of the city with high concentrations of grease-producing businesses.

"In an environment where waste has increasing value, particularly yellow grease, licensed haulers need to operate in a market where they can deliver safe and reliable disposal services to City businesses," said BIC Commissioner and Chair Shari C. Hyman, "This innovative, cross-agency taskforce helps us direct valuable enforcement resources to the most problematic areas and protect the integrity of the market for haulers and their customers. I want to thank DEP and the Mayor's Office of Policy and Strategic Planning for partnering with BIC in this important effort."

"Grease clogs are among the leading causes of blocked sewer lines and are responsible for more than 60 percent of all sewer backups in New York City," said Commissioner Strickland. "DEP has made enormous investments to better manage our sewer system and use the latest analytical tools. In the last two years alone, DEP has removed more than 30 million pounds of debris and sediment from our sewers, providing roughly 2 million gallons of extra



sewer capacity during wet weather. By ensuring that grease is properly disposed of we can prevent costly problems for homeowners and businesses.”

“Before anyone has looked under a manhole or opened a grease trap, our analytics tools are using data from three different agencies to help us choose targets more wisely and enforce the law more effectively,” said John Feinblatt, the Mayor’s Chief Policy Advisor. “Ensuring proper grease disposal is a win for law-abiding businesses, a win for New York City and a win for the environment.”

"It is vitally important for us to maintain the infrastructure necessary for businesses and residents to thrive," said Rick Sampson, President and CEO of the New York State Restaurant Association (NYSRA). "NYSRA supports the BIC's and DEP's efforts to educate regulated industries on how to maintain safe and proper grease traps which helps protect this important infrastructure."

When water is discharged after washing dishes and equipment, the greasy water passes through grease interceptors which separate the fats, oil and grease from the wastewater. The grease then floats to the top of the interceptor and accumulates until it is manually removed. The wastewater continues to flow through the interceptor, into a discharge pipe, and then to the City’s sewer system. DEP field staff routinely finds sewer infrastructure clogged with hardened grease, and sends inspectors throughout the hospitality industry to check interceptors and make sure they are correctly sized, properly installed, maintained, and operating effectively. If an interceptor is too small, inspectors will order the business owner or operator to install the proper unit in accordance with the New York City Building Code.

The transport of grease from commercial establishments must be performed by a trade waste hauler licensed by BIC. Currently, there are 29 BIC-licensed grease haulers in the city that service approximately 17,000 commercial and institutional establishments. In 2011, nearly 8.3 million gallons of yellow grease and 1.8 million gallons of brown grease were collected by licensed haulers in the City.

Illegal yellow grease hauling has expanded because yellow grease is an inexpensive and easily refined material used in the production of biodiesel fuels. The amount of yellow grease produced by commercial establishments in the City has made it an attractive market. These illegal operators scout various sites across the city and will either remove grease for free or pay for it. In some cases, illegal operators have been found to have tampered with storage barrels and removed grease without authorization from the establishment or carter. Haulers found to be engaging in unlicensed activity are issued a heavy fine from BIC and instructed to apply for a City-issued license to operate. Businesses that improperly dispose of grease are issued Commissioner’s Orders from DEP, advised of grease disposal requirements, and instructed to use a licensed hauler.

The grease interceptor informational video was launched by DEP to improve the way New York City serves businesses and educates operators on proper grease disposal, and can be viewed [here](#). The three-minute online video—developed by Inform NYC and produced by NYC Media—explains what businesses need to know about their grease interceptor, including proper



installation and maintenance. Every business that produces and disposes of fat, oil and grease must have an interceptor system to prevent the discharge of grease into the City's sewer system. Controlling this discharge will help reduce sewer blockages and backups that can impair waterways, damage property, and affect public health.

The Business Integrity Commission ("BIC") is both a law enforcement and regulatory agency charged with the oversight of the private carting industry, the businesses operating in the City's public wholesale markets, and the shipboard gambling industry. The mission of BIC is to eliminate organized crime and other forms of corrupting and criminality from the industries it regulates. For more information, visit www.nyc.gov/bic, or follow us on Twitter at www.twitter.com/nycbic.

DEP manages the city's water supply, providing more than one billion gallons of water each day to more than nine million residents, including eight million in New York City. The water is delivered from a watershed that extends more than 125 miles from the city, comprising 19 reservoirs and three controlled lakes. Approximately 7,000 miles of water mains, tunnels and aqueducts bring water to homes and businesses throughout the five boroughs, and 7,400 miles of sewer lines and 96 pump stations take wastewater to 14 in-city treatment plants. DEP employs nearly 5,700 employees, including almost 1,000 in the upstate watershed. For more information, visit www.nyc.gov/dep, like us on Facebook at www.facebook.com/nycwater, or follow us on Twitter at www.twitter.com/nycwater.

The Mayor's Office of Policy and Strategic Planning conducts analyses of cross-agency data that assists agencies in allocating their resources in addressing the day-to-day needs of New Yorkers. For more information visit www.nyc.gov/fctf