

Summer  
2019

# The Hartselle

# Connection

*Serving Hartselle's People, Building for Hartselle's Future*

## F.O.G. Alert: Keep Fats, Oils & Grease Out of Your Drain

Fats, oils & grease – referred to as F.O.G. – are found in common foods including butter, cooking oil, salad dressings, mayonnaise, grease, lard, shortening, gravy, sauces, meat, fish, and many food scraps. If it is poured down your drain or into your kitchen garbage disposal, F.O.G. can build up over time.

F.O.G. can be evil. It seems harmless enough, in the form of leftover food or liquid, when it's poured down a drain or into a disposal, but then it forms into large, thick grease balls. And there it waits, lurking in the sewer pipes, attracting more F.O.G. until it blocks the pipe, causing sewage backups and spills, creating environmental problems and potential public health issues.

F.O.G. is the number one cause of backups into basements, and it is your sewer system's worst enemy.

It can easily clog your own sewer pipes between your home and the sewer system, causing expensive sewer problems and even backups into your home. It is important to note that when sewer pipes back up on private property, the homeowner or business owner is responsible for repair and cleanup.

And, when F.O.G. reaches the Hartselle Wastewater Treatment Plant, it adds to treatment costs: solids have to be filtered out, including oils, which don't mix with water. This raises the costs for all Hartselle Utilities wastewater customers.

But almost every family – especially those in the South – uses fats, oils, and grease for cooking. If F.O.G. can't be poured down the drain or disposal, what's the best way to handle it?

### Cool It. Can It. Trash It.

When cleaning your kitchen, remove food scraps with dry methods, such as scraping, before using water. Wet cleaning methods typically wash F.O.G. down the drain. Scrape leftovers into the trash or compost bin.

If you have leftover grease or oil, while it is still in liquid form pour it into an empty metal can with a sealable lid. Allow it to cool in this container, make sure you seal the can, and then throw it into the trash.

Don't use hot water to rinse grease off cookware, utensils, or dishes. With greasy pots and pans, after pouring the grease into a container, use a rubber scraper or a paper towel to wipe out the remaining grease before washing the pan.

If you have a large amount of liquid – more than a half gallon – mix the oil with an absorbent material such as cat litter or coffee grounds.

Wipe down counters and greasy work areas with paper towels. Cloth towels will accumulate grease, which will eventually end up in your drains from the washing machine.

In addition to F.O.G., there

*Continued on back*



## Coordinating Projects With City Planners Helps All Departments

As you probably noticed, over several weeks this past spring Hartselle Utilities crews worked on the sewer system on Corsbie Street and surrounding areas. Traffic was reduced to one-way during the construction in some instances and the street was completely closed on other occasions.

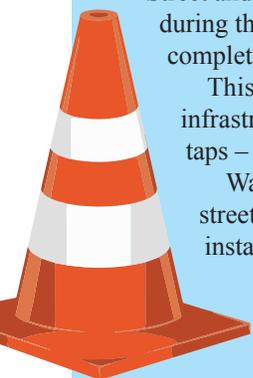
This area is one of several with aging sewer system infrastructure – 50-year-old manholes and sewer service taps – HU staff has identified.

Water, sewer and gas lines are no longer installed under streets, whenever possible. When the sewer system was installed 50 years ago, however, construction practices were quite different. Sewer lines were frequently buried under streets, and service taps were often

buried up to 18 feet deep, requiring major damage to roadways when repairs were needed.

For this reason, HU staff has worked closely with the Mayor's office to identify upcoming road paving projects in the City's budget that correspond with needed sewer infrastructure repairs, and where needed, scheduling infrastructure repairs just before the paving is scheduled to begin. Because there is no extra cost to the City to pave over a completed sewer project, this not only saves Hartselle Utilities money, explains General Manager Bob Sittason, it also decreases the number of road construction projects that residents have to navigate around.

"We will continue to coordinate with the City to minimize inconvenience to residents," explains Sittason.



## Keep F.O.G. Out of Your Drain *continued from front*

are other materials that should never be poured down the drain or flushed down the toilet:

- Don't put anything into toilets other than human waste and toilet paper. Even if a wet wipe is advertised as 'flushable,' it's a solid. Throw it in the trash.
- Use environmentally friendly detergents and cleaning products.
- Wash paint brushes in a bucket and pour the water into your yard or garden, away from drains.
- Dispose of household chemicals in safe containers.
- Put leftover medicine in the trash, never down the drain or into the toilet.

If you think you may have accidentally poured F.O.G. into your drains, you may be able to clean the drain by pouring 1/2 cup of baking soda down the drain, followed by 1/2 cup of white vinegar. Wait 10-15 minutes, then rinse with hot water.

Keeping F.O.G. out of Hartselle's sewer system helps keep the lines clear, helps the environment, and saves money.

## A Warm Welcome & Bittersweet Goodbyes



Kyzer

Hartselle Utilities welcomes John Kyzer to our Meter Reading Team. John joined HU in May 2019 and brings with him an excellent work ethic and drive to help our team and serve our customers. John and his wife, Caitlin, reside in the Laceys Spring community and are expecting their first child in October.

Hartselle Utilities bids farewell to two employees who are retiring in July 2019. Chris Burgess leaves our Electric Department after over 28 years of service with Hartselle Utilities. He has been a great leader and mentor to our electric crews, as he has served as Foreman for over 12 years.

Lynn Wood has worked for HU for over 18 years. He has served in every position in our Field Operations department, starting as an installer and working his way up to Superintendent.

Burgess and Wood take with them not only a wealth of knowledge in each of their fields but also many fond memories and great contributions towards the advancement of this utility. Best of luck to you both! You will be missed!

## Upcoming Hartselle Chamber of Commerce Events

10th Annual Cotton Pickin' BBQ Cook-Off  
Friday July 26 - Saturday July 27

Depot Days Festival 2019  
Saturday, September 21



A MESSAGE FROM THE  
HARTSELLE FIRE DEPARTMENT

# BE SAFE WITH FIREWORKS

Never let kids use fireworks without a responsible adult nearby. Firecrackers and rockets are too dangerous for children to handle. If you give kids sparklers, make sure they keep them outside and away from the face, clothing, and hair. Sparklers can reach 1,200°F and cause 3rd-degree burns.

If not handled properly, all fireworks can cause burns and eye injuries in kids and adults. The best way to protect your family is not to use any fireworks at home — period. Attend public fireworks displays, and leave the lighting to the professionals.

## Rates Increasing July 1

Rates for water and gas services will increase effective July 1, 2019.

The water rates will increase across the board by 2.0 percent. The average residential monthly water bill will increase \$.53.

Natural gas will increase 2.165 percent across the board. The average residential monthly natural gas bill during the heating season will increase \$.92.

## Hartselle Recycling Calendar

Here are the next four months of Hartselle's Recycling Calendar. If you have a question about recycling, visit [hartselle.org](http://hartselle.org) or call Public Works at (256) 773-2643.

July '19							August '19						
Su	M	Tu	W	Th	F	Sa	Su	M	Tu	W	Th	F	Sa
30	1	2	3	4	5	6					1	2	3
7	8	9	10	11	12	13	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
14	15	16	17	18	19	20	11	12	13	14	15	16	17
21	22	23	24	25	26	27	18	19	20	21	22	23	24
28	29	30	31				25	26	27	28	29	30	31

September '19							October '19						
Su	M	Tu	W	Th	F	Sa	Su	M	Tu	W	Th	F	Sa
1	2	3	4	5	6	7			1	2	3	4	5
8	9	10	11	12	13	14	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
15	16	17	18	19	20	21	13	14	15	16	17	18	19
22	23	24	25	26	27	28	20	21	22	23	24	25	26
29	30						27	28	29	30	31		

ZONE 1-A	ZONE 2-A
ZONE 1-B	ZONE 2-B
ZONE 3-A	ZONE 4-A
ZONE 3-B	ZONE 4-B

For the full Recycling Pickup Calendar and Zone Map, visit [hartselle.org](http://hartselle.org)



Have you signed up for E-Bill?

[www.hartselleutilities.org/e-bill](http://www.hartselleutilities.org/e-bill)

Have a non-emergency question or a question about your bill? Email us at [inquiries@hartselleutilities.org](mailto:inquiries@hartselleutilities.org). We try to respond to billing and general questions within 24 hours; service issues that need investigation may take up to 48 hours. **To report a gas leak, sewer backup or power outage, call our office.** Our phones are answered 24 hours a day, seven days a week. During business hours (M-F, 7:30 am - 4:30 pm), call (256) 773-3340. After hours, call (256) 773-2533 or (256) 773-2588.

**SMELL GAS? ACT FAST!**

**256-773-2533 or 911**

The Hartselle Connection is published quarterly by Hartselle Utilities.

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[HartselleUtilities.org](http://HartselleUtilities.org)