



AMERICAN SOCIETY OF PLUMBING ENGINEERS

NON-PROFIT ORGANIZATION

BOSTON CHAPTER

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Exterior Grease Interceptors

If you are involved in the design of a Project containing a large producer of grease in a kitchen say, for example, a school, a restaurant, or perhaps an office building with a large cafeteria more than likely you will need an Exterior Grease Interceptor for the Project. This will generally consist of at least a 1500 gallon and in some cases, substantially larger Interceptor. Generally, in Massachusetts, this would consist of a Precast Concrete Septic Tank with prescribed piping configurations. As the Plumbing Engineer you need to be fully versed in the requirements of the Mass Plumbing Code as well as the other Authorities having Jurisdiction over the exterior Grease Interceptor.

If there is an exterior grease interceptor, you, the Plumbing Professional, must include all of the piping to, within, and to 10 feet beyond the concrete structure, including a 4" vent from the structure to the roof. All the piping must be cast iron and ***it must be installed by the Plumber.*** Because the requirement for the exterior structure will be determined by the Civil Engineer on the Project it would seem that the Civil Engineer would "own" and detail the installation. You should coordinate this carefully with the Civil Section. The installation of the tank and access manholes including details of excavation, backfilling, waterproofing, etc is Civil Work and should be owned by the Civil. No matter the distance from the building the Piping up to 10 feet ***downstream of*** the Structure is Plumbing Work and should be detailed and dimensioned and stamped by the Plumbing Section. While there is a fine line distinguishing between an interceptor and a trap, for the sake of us old timers I am going to call it a trap in this article.

Whether or not there is an exterior trap will be determined by the Civil Engineer. If the Project is served by an on-site sewage disposal or treatment system DEP regs will require the trap and will specify the method of sizing. If the Project is on a public sewer system, the local Town/City Engineer or Sewer Department will determine the need and size of an exterior grease trap and the Civil Engineer member of the Design Team will coordinate with these AHJ's. This is where it gets dicey. Generally, these agencies' details will likely accept PVC piping within the structure and will ***not*** require a chamber vent. As the Project Plumbing Professional, you need to apprise the team of the Plumbing Code requirements

Under the Code, 10.09(1) (a) requires interceptors and separators to prevent *gasoline, grease, sand,..... from the public sewer, or sewage treatment plant* 10.09(2)(a) specifies the type of establishments where interior grease traps are required and in (c) which particular fixtures require the traps. There was a time when you did not need interior traps if there was an exterior trap. The Code, however, requires them at all these locations whether or not there is an exterior trap. That requirement has been in effect for at least 15 years.

10.09(3) states that when an exterior trap is required, the ***entire system*** within the property lines is a "***dedicated system***" and in (b) requires the chamber vent. By definition and by interpretation of the Board a "dedicated system" is Plumber's work. Please, familiarize yourself with these regs and discuss them carefully with the Design Team so that the documents are clear.

Manuel B. Garcia, PE, CPD 12/10/09