

INTERCEPTORS – COMMON QUESTIONS

Where can I locate the grease interceptor ?

Big Max® and SuperMax® interceptors that are installed outside should be located with at least three feet of clear space around all sides of the interceptor and seven feet of clear space above the interceptor for access in the event of an issue and for the regular pumping of the interceptor. It is the responsibility of the restaurant owner to maintain safe, clear and unobstructed access to the interceptor at all times.

Do I need to install the flow control ?

For Hydromechanical Grease Interceptors (HGI) the PDI G-101 Standard requires that all grease interceptors be installed with an external, vented, flow control fitting. The grease interceptor does not meet the requirements of PDI G-101 without the installation of the external vented flow control fitting. The ASME A112.14.3, Type C Standard allows an approved grease interceptor to be installed with an internal flow control plate. For Gravity Grease Interceptors (GGI), a flow control is not required.

What can be connected to the grease interceptor ?

A grease interceptor must not and cannot receive any sanitary waste water (for example, from a toilet). Waste water discharge into a grease interceptor can only be from food service fixtures. The types of fixtures and appliances that can and cannot be connected to a grease interceptor vary according to local codes and requirements. A licensed professional plumber, or your local city plan check department or plumbing code officials should be consulted for clarification on this.

Do grease interceptors need to be directly vented ?

Gravity Grease Interceptors (GGI) do require to be directly vented. A Hydromechanical Grease Interceptor (HGI) does not require to be directly vented unless specifically mandated by local code or by law. Venting is required on the downstream drain line – the same as most other plumbing appliances and fixtures to allow efficient and unrestricted discharge of the waste water.

Do I need to install a cleanout before or after the interceptor ?

Most plumbing codes require an upstream and downstream cleanout immediately before and after the interceptor. This is good practice and indicates which outlet is in use.

Should I install a solids interceptor with the grease interceptor ?

Grease interceptors are not designed to accommodate large amounts of solid material. The accumulation of unremoved solids will negatively impact the performance and efficiency of the grease interceptor and cause foul odors. MIFAB® strongly recommends that a solids interceptor be installed upstream of the grease interceptor and that all entry points to the drains connected to the grease interceptor be protected with sediment buckets to prevent debris from entering the drain lines and the interceptor. It is recommended that all plates, pots, pans, etc . . . be scraped to remove loose food debris prior to washing.

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Should I pressure test the grease interceptor ?

No. The MIFAB® grease interceptor is considered a plumbing accessory and must be isolated from the drainage system in the event that final drain testing or other system pressure testing is required. The interceptor must not under any circumstances be subjected to an air, water or any other type of pressure test. This action will result in damage to the interceptor, invalidate the warranty and could cause serious injury to those near the interceptor.

How often should the grease interceptor be cleaned ?

A grease interceptor is typically not cleaned often enough. If left too long, the accumulated grease will pass through the interceptor and into the sanitary sewer lines and cause foul odors. MIFAB® recommends that grease interceptors be inspected and if necessary, cleaned weekly to ensure efficient performance. Your local city plan check department or plumbing code officials should be consulted for clarification on how often your grease interceptor needs to be cleaned. If you are experiencing frequent issues with regards to blockages or accumulation of grease in your interceptor, it is likely a result of the grease interceptor not being cleaned often enough. Do not modify the interceptor or means of flow control in any way. Doing this voids the performance approval required by your local jurisdiction and will leave your operation exposed to the risk of fines and citations.

Do I need to install a sampling port after the grease interceptor ?

For HGI, most jurisdictions do not require a sampling port to test the effluent from the grease interceptor. For those areas that do, a sampling port access is molded as standard into the top of the internal outlet piping within all Big Max® and SuperMax® grease interceptors. This can be accessed by removing the lid closest to the outlet. In addition, MIFAB® manufactures external sampling ports (see page 11) that some jurisdictions require to be installed after the grease interceptor in order to have a means to test the effluent from the interceptor. Most jurisdictions require the installation of an external sampling port for all GGI.

How does a HGI replace the function of a 1000 gallon concrete tank (GGI) ?

A Gravity Grease Interceptor (GGI), (typically a concrete tank) is sized according to liquid holding capacity usually between 750 and 1,500 gallons. In most jurisdictions, a method called the 25% rule is used to indicate how often the GGI should be cleaned. The 25% is the total working volume of the interceptor which can be occupied by a combination of Fats, Oil and Grease and Food Solids (FOG).

For example, a GGI with a liquid holding capacity of 1,000 gallons can only function to a point where 250 gallons (1,000 x .25) of its' volume is occupied by solids and grease. This equates to approximately 1,090 lbs. of grease. Assuming that 100 gallons of the 1,090 lbs. is solid material, then only 150 gallons of grease capacity remains before cleaning is required. This typically means that the interceptor must be cleaned every 8 – 10 weeks. In comparison, the MIFAB® Big Max® XL-M-G-PL-1150, 100 GPM, PDI-101 tested and certified Hydromechanical Grease Interceptor (HGI) has a significantly smaller 300 gallon liquid holding capacity but a third party laboratory tested grease separation efficiency of 95%. This translates to essentially the same grease capacity as the GGI, exceeding 1,000 lbs. of functional grease capacity.