

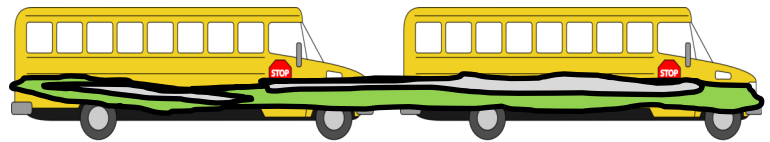
Macomb County

FATBERG

A Fatberg is formed by a collection of Fats, Oils & Greases (known as FOG) in a sewer line. As the Fatberg grows, any solids in the sewer, such as personal wipes, get bound up in the FOG. The Fatberg restricts sewer flow and can accelerate the degradation of sewer lines by increasing the volume of sewer gas in the line.



Relative size of the Macomb County Fatberg in comparison to a school bus.



Where is the Macomb County Fatberg?

It is in the Lakeshore Interceptor, a large sewer line that runs along the west side of I-94 and serves Clinton, Harrison, Chesterfield & Lenox townships, plus the village of New Haven. The fatberg is immediately north of the Clintondale Pump Station, at the southern end of Union Lake Road. At that point, the Lakeshore Interceptor is about 50 feet below ground.

How large is the Fatberg?

It is 100 feet long and as much as 6 feet high in some places. It is in an 11-foot diameter pipe and stretches the entire width of the pipe.

How much does Fatberg weigh?

Fatberg weighed about 19 tons, not counting liquids.

Why did this happen here?

As the Lakeshore Interceptor reaches the Clintondale Pump Station, some sewage is always held in the pipe. At the pump station, the liquid sewage is lifted by a pump to the 15 Mile Interceptor, which is about 20 feet above the Lakeshore Interceptor. In the process, the sewage makes about a 90 degree turn, going from more or less north-south to east-west, ultimately on a journey to the sewage treatment plant in Detroit.

How is it being removed?

Initially high-pressure jets of water were used but failed to break apart the Fatberg. Sewer workers then used hand saws and shovels to break it up. The Fatberg is then sucked up into a vactor truck. In that process, liquids are returned to the sewer and solids remain in the truck's tank. The solids are being disposed of in a landfill.

How much will it cost to remove the Fatberg?

Approximately \$100,000 has been allocated.

Do Fatbergs happen in other places?

All sewer systems are impacted by Fatbergs. The most famous Fatberg was found and removed from the sewer under London England was a nearly 400-foot long monster removed several years ago. In 2017, a Fatberg in the sewers of Baltimore, Maryland, caused a back up that forced 1.2 million gallons of sewage into a local river. Locally, city and townships across Macomb County frequently have to clean out their sewer lines due to FOG build-up.

What can be done to prevent Fatbergs?

One of the reasons MCPWO has launched this public education campaign is because the public can play a huge role in solving this problem. By wiping out greasy pans with a paper towel before washing

them, by collecting cooking grease in a can or jar rather than pouring it down the drain, by eliminating or reducing garbage disposal use — all these efforts greatly reduce FOG buildup. Restaurants can help by ensuring they have properly functioning grease traps that are cleaned out on a regular basis.

The MCPWO is working with the Macomb County Health Department and local units of government to get the word out on how to prevent costly and damaging Fatbergs.

DON'T feed
the **FATBERG**

