

2012 TEEA Winner Pollution Prevention Category:

Dallas Water Utilities

Narrator:

More than 4,000 miles of sewer lines crisscross underneath Dallas. Those responsible for maintaining them say one of their biggest challenges comes from fats, oils and grease.

Morgan Dadgostar, Senior Program Manager, Dallas Water Utilities:

It clogs our waste water pipes. Untreated sewer overflows into our streets, or it can back up into homes and businesses.

Narrator:

To curb these overflows, Dallas Water uses preventative maintenance, regulatory enforcement, and outreach.

Helen Cantril Dulac, Grease Abatement Coordinator, Dallas Water Utilities:

So we started an educational outreach campaign to let people know the proper ways to dispose of their cooking oils and greases

Narrator:

The “Cease the Grease” campaign includes materials for apartments and restaurants, publications in several languages, an interactive model ... and even its own rap video.

Water utility staff visits about fifty schools every year.

Sibusisiwe McNeil, Eighth Grade Science Teacher, Greiner Middle School:

I actually had two students that from this derived their science fair project.

Narrator:

Eighth-graders Ruby Aguilar and Katelyn Cook studied how spilled grease impacts the environment.

Katelyn Cook, Eighth Grade Student:

Grease was actually the second most harmful solution. It was right behind antifreeze.

Ruby Aguilar, Eighth Grade Student:

Followed by gasoline, soda, and water.

Narrator:

In addition to schools, Cease the Grease teamed up with Whole Foods Market ... To set up drop-off sites at Dallas-area stores.

Karen Lukin, Dallas Media and Community Relations, Whole Foods Market:

Generally our guests bring on the average of 50 gallons a week.

Narrator:

Since the program began in 2005, the City of Dallas has cut grease-related overflows by 93 percent ... due in a large part to increased awareness. Door hangers, for example, are distributed in neighborhoods where overflows occur—one of the many ways in which the city's managed to spread the message.

Ruby Aguilar:

We actually customized it with our names on it.

Helen Cantril Dulac:

We've created this grassroots network across the city of Dallas of people who know and care about this program and about the quality of life.