

Catering firms urged to lift FOG over recycling

ANGLIAN Water yesterday marked World Environment Day by urging restaurateurs and other catering businesses to spare a thought for their local sewers - by cutting down on FOG.

The water company working in partnership with Ipswich Borough Council and agricultural merchant J & H Bate, has launched one of the country's biggest free collection and recycling partnerships for disposing of fats, oils and grease.

Anglian Water estimates that, at any one time, 16% of its sewer network is clogged with fats, oils and grease - collectively known as FOG - amounting to around 10,000 tonnes. That is enough to fill four Olympic sized swimming pools and could be converted into 10million litres of biodiesel fuel - enough to run 5,000 average family cars for a year.

Local restaurants, takeaways, pubs, hotels and catering outlets are now being urged to sign up to the scheme, and be more aware of how FOG can not only block sewers and pollute the environment but also lead to bad odours and attract rodents.

Collette Nicholas, media manager for Anglian Water, said: "Fat production for cooking purposes has tripled since the 1960s with more and more of it ending up down the sewers. We are delighted to be working with Ipswich Borough Council on the promotion of this scheme on World Environment Day."

David Harrod, of J & H Bate, said: "We see this project as an ideal fit between public and private sectors working together for the good of the local community.

"The free service ticks all the

right boxes for everyone in terms of recycling waste oils and fats into a locally produced, sustainable, carbon-neutral and renewable biodiesel."

Donna Baldwin, senior environmental health officer at Ipswich Borough Council, added: "Environmental health officers within the team are pleased to be working with Anglian Water to promote good practice in the disposal of fats, oils and grease from food establishments."

Yesterday's launch event was held at Ipswich Town Football Club and was also attended by representatives from Environmental Biotech, which is also chaired by club chairman David Sheepshanks. All used cooking oil from manufacturing and hospitality at the club is already recycled.

■ The East of England Development Agency (EEDA) yesterday urged local businesses to switch off unused lights, computers and monitors as part of a World Environment Day campaign to help reduce the region's carbon footprint.

According to EEDA, the average office wastes more than 15,000 each year by leaving equipment switched on overnight and at weekends. To maximise savings, computers should even be switched off during lunch breaks.

Other tips from EEDA to cut carbon emissions include replacing conventional light bulbs with energy-saving ones, using video conferencing rather than travel to a meeting, cycling to work or car-sharing with a colleague and only boiling enough water in the kettle for the amount you need when making the tea.