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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

### **NEW & REPLACEMENT GARBAGE DISPOSAL UNITS BANNED**

**WAKE FOREST, NC – March 17, 2008** – On March 4, 2008 the Raleigh City Council voted to approve an ordinance that prohibits new garbage disposals or food scrap grinders from being installed or connected to the City's sanitary sewer system. The ordinance also prohibits residential and commercial establishments from replacing existing garbage disposals that are no longer operational. City Manager J. Russell Allen said the City will work with the area plumbing industry on enforcing the new ordinance.

The ordinance takes effect today and applies to all City of Raleigh water customers, including those in towns that have merged water and sewer systems with Raleigh, including Wake Forest.

Violators will be issued a notice of violation and a civil penalty assessment of up to \$25,000 per day and possibly incur a temporary or permanent interruption of water and sewer services.

The owners of functional garbage disposals may continue to use the appliances. However, the ordinance adopted by the City Council encourages these residents and businesses to voluntarily discontinue using the garbage disposals.

The ban on new garbage disposals was included in an enhanced wastewater management plan presented to the City Council in 1999. The plan was designed to further prevent and minimize sewer overflows. Council members approved a series of recommendations in the plan but never took action on the garbage disposal installation prohibition ordinance.

City Manager J. Russell Allen said that 48 to 50 sewer overflows occur annually in the Raleigh sewer system. He said that 40 percent of these overflows are directly caused by food and grease being placed in the sewer system. It is unlawful to put food and grease down drains that feed into the Raleigh sewer system. The State is threatening to levy civil penalties on the City of Raleigh for each of these overflows. Only water, human waste and toilet paper should be discharged into the sewer system.

Because garbage disposals require water and energy to operate, prohibiting the installation and replacement of these devices will conserve electrical energy and the City's drinking water supply, in addition to reducing the number of sewer overflows in Raleigh.

For more information, contact Dale Crisp, City of Raleigh Public Utilities Director at (919) 857-4540.

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For more information on the [Town of Wake Forest](#), contact [Bill Crabtree](#), Public Information Officer, at (919) 554-6196.