

The Fatberg: Sandra Faase

Unbeknownst to the residents of the town, their undesirable habits were giving rise to an ever-growing monster.

Their fry ups were legendary. Wafts of succulent meat searing thickened the night air. The fat of all manner of beast spat and smoked in kitchens. And although the residuals were prized for making luscious gravy, great globs of adipose matter made its way down thousands of slurping sinks.

They refused to heed instructions for proper disposal. Their desire for a spotless back passage you would think might translate to the thoughtful disposal of their toilet wipes. But no. These were flushed with abandon into the antiquated sewers. In fact, the citizens of the town flushed all manner of things: sanitary pads, kitty litter, condoms, to name but a few. It seemed to them such a sanitary thing to do in comparison to carting these mucky items to their garbage bins where they would surely fester.

Over many decades the discarded fat congealed into a blob at a sluggish bend in the brick sewer; above this very spot at street level stood a historic cathedral, one of the town's prize attractions. The things that should never have entered the sewer were caught in the unholy matrix of the burgeoning blob whilst the town's citizens above asked the good Lord to forgive their sins.

Then one day, people's toilets started gurgling violently. And up belched a putrid, chunky sludge.

Sirens rang throughout the city, as the sewer burst and flooded its famed historic heart.

The municipal engineers investigated what looked to be the epicentre of the heaving burst and found to their horror, a fatberg bigger than a minibus.

The headlines of the day admonished the town's citizens: Horrid habits unleash fatberg fiasco.

The clean-up cost millions. The fatberg was dismantled bit-by-bit. Analysis revealed more of the town's clandestine habits including a penchant for illegal drug use.

Despite the cost and commotion, the town's habits changed very little, and a Fatberg Tax was proposed.