Jackson County
Environmental Public Health
2018 Fall Newsletter

GET A HANDLE ON HAND WASHING!

Hand washing is the foundation practice for food safety and public health. Sometimes it can feel redundant or inconvenient. But we must always remember that it's worth the time to wash hands to help prevent the spread of germs and disease and to keep the public safe. Many jobs and livelihoods depend on food safety. If customers get sick at your establishment, they will likely never come back, and they will tell everyone they know about their experience.

How to properly wash your hands

- Wet your hands with clean, running water and apply soap.

- Rub them together to make a lather and scrub them well; be sure to scrub the backs of hands, between fingers, and under nails.

- Continue rubbing for at least 20 seconds. Sing the "Happy Birthday" song twice to time yourself!

- Rinse hands well under running water.

- Dry your hands using a paper towel or an air dryer.

When to wash your hands

- Before donning gloves

- Before you prepare food, handle clean utensils, or clean cooking equipment

- After touching your face, hair, nose, etc.

- After using the toilet room

- After caring for or handling animals

- After coughing, sneezing, using a handkerchief or disposable tissue, using tobacco, eating, or drinking

- After handling dirty utensils or cooking equipment

- When switching from handling raw foods to foods that are ready-to-eat

Hand washing with warm water and soap is the superior way to prevent the spread of germs and disease. **Hand sanitizer should only be used as a secondary treatment to hands before handling food**. Remember these key facts about alcohol-based hand sanitizers:

- Sanitizers can quickly reduce the number of germs on hands in some situations.

- Sanitizers do *not* get rid of all types of germs.

- Hand sanitizers may not be as effective when hands are visibly dirty or greasy.

- Hand sanitizers might not remove harmful chemicals from hands like pesticides and heavy metal.

CATERING CORNER

Catering is a common and professional means of providing your culinary creations to groups onsite or at offsite locations from your kitchen. As a licensed catering operator, or if you are considering adding catering to your licensed restaurant business, please keep the following in your recipe:

Catering preparation must be conducted from the location where the license has been issued for the caterer. Each license is issued to a business owner at a specific facility location. A licensee of a food service facility cannot accept responsibility for the activities of another food service operator when they share the establishment. Caterers may not operate out of a home kitchen.

Caterers serving food at a function that is open to the public must obtain a **Temporary Restaurant License** from the Health Department prior to the event. If the catered function is closed to the public, such as a wedding or private event, then no additional license is required.

Attention to safe food handling practices is critical to protecting and pleasing your customers. Maintain required temperatures from the point of production to service, and protect product from possible contamination during transport.

Additionally, a pinch of this:
Catering service from a licensed Mobile Food Unit at an event open to the public must be conducted from the mobile unit.

DATE MARKING

Why is "Date Marking" important?

Date marking is required by law and is used as a means of controlling the growth of *Listeria monocytogenes*, a bacteria that continues to slowly grow even at refrigerated temperatures. Date marking ensures foods are discarded before the bacteria reproduces to levels that can cause foodborne illness.

Which foods require date markings?

Date marking is required for ready-to-eat (RTE), potentially hazardous food (TCS or Time Temperature Control for Safety Food) that is prepared and held refrigerated for more than 24 hours.

What does "Ready to Eat" mean?

"Ready to Eat" means that a food is in a form that is edible without additional preparation to achieve food safety.

How do I date mark?

RTE potentially hazardous food may be marked with the date or day by which the food shall be consumed on premises, sold, or discarded. Alternatively, the food may be marked with the date of preparation as long as the food is consumed or discarded within seven days, including the day of preparation. For example, food prepared on May 1 must be discarded on May 7. Date marking can be accomplished by placing the actual date on the container with a discard procedure, color codes, day dots, notebook entries etc. as long as it is understandable, effective, and meets the intent of the code. RTE potentially hazardous foods must be maintained at 41°F or less for the duration of the 7 days.

What if I freeze the food?

Freezing food stops the date marking clock, but does not reset it. So if a food is stored at 41°F for two days and then frozen at 0°F, it can still be stored for five more days after thawing. Adequate information to ensure that foods have not exceeded the seven days needs to be available.

What if I combine food that was opened or prepared on different dates?

When foods are mixed together, the date of the oldest food becomes the new date for the mixed food. For example, in the case that potatoes are cooked for potato salad, if the potatoes are held for 2 days after cooking and then processed into salads, these salads must be consumed within 5 days so as not to exceed the seven-day rule.

What if I combine and cook ready-to-eat, potentially hazardous foods?

If the cooked products were cooled and reheated, the clock starts over after it has been reheated to 165°F (kill step). For example, open date marked containers of ricotta and cooked sausage combined to make lasagna would result in a finished product that would have seven days of holding time prior to being sold or discarded.

WELCOME BACK BRIAN!

Please help us welcome Brian when you see him out and about in your establishments. We are happy to have him back and he is excited to be working again with familiar faces!