



Division of Hotels &
Restaurants



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Inside...

1. **Effective Hand Washing Tips** p.2
2. **Soap Questions & Answers** p. 3
3. **New HEP Class: Street HACCP** p. 3
4. **Difference between "cleaning" & "sanitizing"** p.3
5. **Seafood Safety Tips** p.4

Food For Thought:

Nothing touches everyday people every day like food safety!

Food Safety Quarterly

General food safety information to educate the Florida restaurateur

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KEEP ILL FOOD HANDLERS AWAY FROM FOOD

Recently, a baker employed by a large catering company caused over 3,000 people to seek medical attention. This baker had worked while ill with severe vomiting.

In another similar incident, a prep cook with an upset stomach accompanied by persistent diarrhea continued to prepare food. The result – 120 ill people treated by doctors at a local hospital.

Not only must an operator be concerned for those who become ill; they must also be concerned over lost sales due to bad publicity resulting from such an incident. Before this happens at your establishment, ask yourself these questions:

- Would your employees tell you that they are ill?
- Would you or your manager notice symptoms such as watery eyes, runny nose, frequent trips to the restroom, or jaundice?
- Would you reassign a sick employee to non-food work?

If your answers are "no", perhaps you need to answer one last question – Do you have a good attorney?

Managing Employee Health – The requirements regarding employee illness are simple and direct. If an employee is ill or is exhibiting symptoms of illness including diarrhea, fever, vomiting, jaundice, sore throat with fever or lesions or wounds that contain pus, the employee should not handle food, clean equipment, utensils, linens, or unwrapped single-service articles. Operators should have a plan to help them be aware of their employees' health and what to do if such a situation occurs.

Exclusion of Ill Employees - Health authorities require exclusion of employees who are diagnosed with *Salmonella Typhi*, *Shigella*, *Escherichia coli 0157:H7*, or Hepatitis A virus. It is the responsibility of management to exclude and/or restrict their employees' duties until such time the employee is no longer a threat and has been cleared by a doctor to return.

A person with Hepatitis A may be contagious up to two weeks before displaying any symptoms. During that time, an employee infected with Hepatitis A may unknowingly infect co-workers or customers who consume the contaminated food.

No bare hand contact of ready-to-eat foods and proper handwashing greatly reduces the risk of spreading these diseases.

Question New Employees – After a conditional offer of employment, managers should inquire about the health of their new employee. Such questions should include:

- Do you currently have diarrhea, abdominal cramps, fever, vomiting, jaundice, sore throat, boils, or infected open and running cuts or sores?
- Have you ever been diagnosed with an illness transmitted through food?
- Is anyone in your family currently ill with any of the symptoms listed above?
- Have you eaten any food prepared by someone with any of the symptoms listed above?
- Have you worked with an ill person exhibiting these symptoms?

If any answers are affirmative, the manager should pursue clarification before allowing the new employee to begin work.

Food Safety Training – Food managers are required to be tested and certified in food handling safety. In addition, managers are required to insure that all employees are following proper procedures when conducting food preparation and handwashing operations. Management should recognize employees with certificates, pins and/or insignia for completing internal training program modules in order to encourage participation.

Food safety should be viewed as a non-negotiable priority in all food service

operations. Employee training goes a long way toward reducing the spread of illness, limiting food waste, increasing profits, and furthering understanding about foodborne disease. Food safety training is smart business that protects a company's good name and saves time and money in the long run. It's a win-win situation for all involved.

Handwashing – Just as the use of soap and water were major contributing factors in controlling the spread of the great plagues in Europe, a strong and monitored program of handwashing in a food service operation can significantly decrease the incidence of foodborne illness in public food establishments. The basic practice of proper handwashing is the single most important action that can be taken to prevent the spread of disease.

TIPS FOR EFFECTIVE HANDWASHING

1. Use warm water.
2. Wet hands and exposed arms up to the elbow.
3. Apply handsoap.
4. Rub hands and forearms briskly for at least twenty (20) seconds.
5. Rinse thoroughly under clean warm water.
6. Dry hands and arms thoroughly by sanitary means (disposable paper towels or air dryer).

Be sure to **WASH YOUR HANDS:**

- Before starting work.
- Before putting on gloves.
- After using the restroom.
- After touching your hair, face, or body.
- After eating, drinking, smoking, or touching chewing gum.
- Upon entering a food preparation area.
- After working with raw food.
- After cleaning or taking out garbage.
- After touching anything that contaminates the hands.

SOAP QUESTIONS & ANSWERS

What's the difference between antibacterial and plain soap?

Antibacterial soaps contain an active ingredient that kills or inhibits bacteria. Depending upon the agent, the concentration, and whether the soap is rinsed off, antibacterial soap may also offer residual protection against germs on the hands.

Are antibacterial soaps preferable?

The FDA Food Code does not require the use of antimicrobial soaps and sanitizers under normal operating conditions. Most bacteria are removed from the hands by effective hand washing as listed on page 2 in [Tips for Effective Hand Washing](#) regardless of to the type of soap used. Antibacterial soaps and alcohol-based dips can actually be harsh to the skin after prolonged use.

What types of hand soaps and sanitizers should be used by food service workers?

While the FDA Food Code does not dictate what type of soap should be used for handwashing, it does specify that, if a hand sanitizer is used, it should contain antimicrobial ingredients that can be safely used in contact with skin or food.

STREET HACCP AND FOOD MANAGER WORKSHOPS OFFERED BY HEP

Street HACCP - The Division of Hotels & Restaurants is conducting retail HACCP and Food Manager training at convenient locations throughout the state. This training is free to all H&R licensed establishments and is offered at a nominal fee of \$6.00 to all other attendees.

Street HACCP is a process-oriented approach to hazard analysis that greatly

streamlines the entire HACCP concept. The classes are three (3) hours in length and provide attendees with a basic understanding of HACCP systems by scrutinizing processes such as cooking, cooling, and reheating. While it is recommended that attendees have some food safety background including a Professional Food Managers Certification, it is not required in order to take the course.

Food Manager Workshop - The Food Manager workshops, presented in both English and Spanish, help to prepare attendees for the Food Manager Certification exam. Exams are offered following each workshop.

For general information, class registration, and directions to the workshop locations, contact the Hospitality Education Program (HEP) at 800-704-1076 or e-mail Judy Ewing at jme4244@mailier.fsu.edu.

CLEANING AND SANITIZING: THERE IS A DIFFERENCE

Quite often people interchange the functions of cleaning and sanitizing. But in the interest of good public health, both the similarities and differences must be clearly established and understood. Cleaning is the removal of dirt, bits of food, grease or fats with soap and hot water. A final rinsing removes any detergent that remains.

Sanitizing, however, means that an item will not only be cleaned, but will also be subjected to further processing utilizing heat or chemicals to reduce the amount of disease causing bacteria that may be present. If hot water is used to sanitize, the water must be at least 171 °F in a sink, 180 °F at a dishmachine manifold, or 160 °F on a dish surface within the dishmachine. Utilizing such hot water in a sink compartment requires the use of a rack and tongs to retrieve the items after immersion for 30 seconds.

Chemicals may also be utilized for sanitizing. The most common are chlorine, iodine, and quaternary ammonia. Each chemical has its own required minimum strength and should always be prepared according to the manufacturer's recommendations in water at a temperature of 75 – 120 °F. Items that are too large to be immersed may be sanitized in place by rinsing, spraying or swabbing the equipment with the chemical solution.

Cleaning and Sanitizing Procedures:

- Follow manufacturer's instructions.
- Insure that the sanitizer concentration does not fall below minimum standards by periodically checking the concentration with test papers or kits.
- Not all household bleaches are acceptable. Scented bleaches may not be used for food contact surfaces because it may leave a residue on the surfaces of equipment.
- An unclean surface cannot be sanitized.
- All sanitized equipment, surfaces, and utensils must be air-dried only, as wiping cloths or paper towels may transfer bacteria. After air-drying is complete, any remaining water spots may be removed by use of a clean, dry towel.

www.hospitalityeducation.org

is the DBPR, Division of Hotels and Restaurants, website where you will find HEP class schedules, links to other related sites and division forms, brochures, pamphlets and other publications.

SEAFOOD NEEDS SPECIAL HANDLING

Provided by the Bureau of Seafood & Aquaculture,
Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services

All seafoods will spoil including frozen products. Even stored under ideal conditions seafoods have a finite shelf life.

The spoiling process begins when finfish and shellfish are caught and die, and is completed in about 2 weeks without preventive measures. Pasteurization, freezing, salting and other preservation techniques slow the spoiling process, but cannot stop it.

All fish and shellfish have bacteria that can thrive at relatively low temperatures. Bacteria start to multiply immediately after death. They multiply slowest when products are held at 29-32°F, the melting point of ice, which should be used liberally on and around fresh products during storage.

Spoilage bacteria multiply progressively faster as product temperatures rise with rapid multiplication occurring when product is over 40°F. As product temperatures rise, bacteria and enzyme loads increase and spoilage accelerates.

When a spoilage bacterium has sufficient food, moisture, and warmth, it can duplicate itself in 20 minutes or less. It is possible for each bacterium to multiply into 64 million bacteria in about 8 hours.

Bacteria can derive the food and moisture they need from seafoods, dirty equipment, ice, employee's hands, and many other sources. "That's why cold temperatures, good sanitation, and good employee hygiene are extremely important."

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