



foodfacts

Madison Department of Public Health Environmental Health Services Section
 Madison, Wisconsin Vol. 2 No. 1 Spring, 1992

Outdoor Food Sales-- What Are Your Options?

When the warm weather returns to Wisconsin, the flowers bloom, the bugs begin to fly and the outdoor food vendors awaken from their winter hibernation. And our phones begin to ring with lots of questions about what can and what can't be done outdoors.

In an effort to make some rather complicated state laws clearer, we will present some basic areas of potential outdoor food sales and the various rules that accompany them. The discussion that follows covers

the most frequently asked questions regarding outdoor food sales.

Outdoor Food Service

If you are currently licensed as a restaurant, you may serve food outdoors on your premises with no additional license.

Restrictions

- There is to be no food handling or food holding outside; all preparation, handling and food holding must be done indoors in the approved kitchen.
- Sit-down restaurants must have adequate code-complying restrooms for the total number of indoor and outdoor available seats.
- Carry-out-only restaurants may not serve food outdoors unless code-complying restrooms are provided for the total number of available seats.



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Keeping Them Clean:

Handwashing Facilities for Temporary Restaurants

Many licensed restaurants participate in special events throughout the summer that require them to obtain Temporary Restaurant Permits. Such events include "Cows on the Concourse," "Art Fair on-the-Square," "Taste of Madison" and other smaller events.

From a health perspective, one of the most important components of the temporary restaurant set-up is the employee handwashing station. An on-site handwashing station is always required, unless all food is pre-wrapped in the licensed kitchen and no further food handling occurs.

Our inspectors see a wide variety of handwashing set-ups in use, many of which are inadequate or ineffective. We have seen people holding water jugs upside down and shaking

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Outdoor Food

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Restaurant Permit and you are part of a special event, such as the U.W. football games, or "Taste of Madison."

Restrictions

• In Madison, a separate permit is required for each location and for each separate event.

• You must comply with the provisions in HSS 196.17 for temporary restaurants (enclosures, water supply, handwashing, etc.).

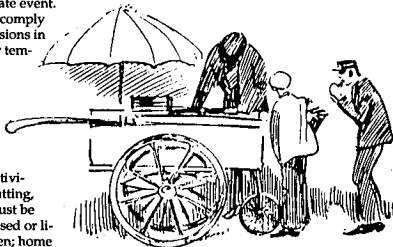
• All food preparation activities, such as cutting, slicing, etc., must be done in a licensed or licensable kitchen; home kitchens are not allowed.

• "Special events" are just that; they are not daily food sales. Temporary restaurant permits must be applied for at least 7 days prior to the event.

the unit; no tables may be set up for sales outside the unit.

- Each mobile restaurant must return to its service base not less than once in each 24 hours for servicing--oftener, if necessary.
- No food may be stored or prepared in a home kitchen.

Additional concerns or questions regarding outdoor food sales may be



directed to your district public health sanitarian between 8 and 9 a.m. at 266-4821. ♦

the impact on the environment.

Safe Food - "You Make the Difference" (Tacoma-Pierce County Health Dept., 20 minutes). A good video that discusses prevention of food borne illness by proper food preparation and storage, hand washing and utensil washing. Proper hand washing is demonstrated.

Other videos available:

Food Safety Is No Mystery (USDA - 34 min, 10 sec). Aimed at people with little or no experience in the food industry. Training manual included.

Wide World of Food Service Brushes (Sparta Brush Co. - 18 min). Reduce or eliminate the potential of creating food-borne illness, which is caused by bacteria, viruses and parasites. (Emphasis on cleaning with brushes.)

The Danger Zone (International Dairy-Deli Assoc. - 30 min). This is a deli food safety and sanitation program to be used by retail employees who prepare and sell food in the deli department. Training manual included.

Sanitizing for Safety (Clorox - 17 min). Very good, concise video which addresses common food-borne illnesses, proper personal hygiene, cross-contamination, proper cooking and holding temperatures, proper food storage and proper sanitization. (Strong emphasis on using bleach as sanitizer). Training guide included.

IPM: Control of German Cockroaches in Commercial Kitchens (National Pest Control Association - 15 min). Good tape to provide the food operator with basic knowledge on roach control and what can be done so the least amount of pesticide is needed. Training manual included.

Please contact your district public health sanitarian for information on how to borrow these videos for training (call 266-4821). ♦

Mobile Restaurants.

Mobile restaurants around Madison are handled, as much as possible, like permanent establishments. The same code requirements apply as far as floors, walls, ceilings and equipment (NSF-approved, or equivalent) as in permanent establishments. Food may be sold from these units if both the mobile unit and the service base where the mobile unit is maintained have licenses from the Health Department

Restrictions

• You must comply with the provisions in HSS 196.16 for mobile restaurants (enclosures, water supply, handwashing, etc.).

• All food sold from the mobile restaurant must be kept confined to

Videos!

Since our last newsletter, we have obtained a few more videos that are available to you for temporary loan.

Food Service Egg Handling and Safety (American Egg Board, 11 minutes). A very good video describing how eggs need to be handled to prevent food-borne illness.

Food Service Disposables: Should I Feel Guilty? (Food Service and Packaging Institute, 11 min 30 sec). A video which discusses the use of food service disposables and

Hepatitis A--Why Should You Call Us?

"Why should I call the Health Department to report that my cook has come down with Hepatitis A? - If they don't find out, they can't cause problems for me."

"I want to get the problem under control before I let the Health Department know about it."

"I need to keep working, no matter how ill I am."

"If I let the Health Department know that one of my employees has Hepatitis A, it's going to cost me a fortune."

Do you see your viewpoint in any of the above statements? Is this how you would respond if you were faced with a *Hepatitis A* problem in your establishment? Hopefully not. But we know food operators sometimes do respond this way. We feel the primary reason that operators try to conceal something as serious as *Hepatitis A* from their health inspector is that they are not aware of the benefits of early reporting.

This is an attempt to look at *Hepatitis A* from the operator's perspective. What should the opera-

tor do to protect his or her business from bad publicity or financial disaster when dealing with a *Hepatitis A* case?

Before we begin this discussion, there is a need to emphasize that there is no way for a food operator to ensure that his or her employees will not come down with *Hepatitis A*. Unless they have previously had the disease and are now immune, anyone can contract this disease if they are exposed to it.

Knowing this, it is important for the operator to routinely monitor the

employees' health. The most common symptoms of *Hepatitis A* are as follows: abrupt onset of fever, extreme fatigue, abdominal pain and possible diarrhea or vomiting; followed within a few days by dark urine and jaundice (yellowing of the skin and/or whites of the eyes). Since this disease is able to be transmitted to others up to two weeks before the first symptoms appear, it is important to closely monitor symptoms when they do appear.

(See Hepatitis, page 4)

Of COURSE We Wash Our Hands!

Food professionals agree that thorough employee hand washing is essential, if we are to provide safe food to the public.

Most of us are aware that raw poultry may be contaminated with *Salmonella* or *Campylobacter* bacteria and that food handlers can have these bacteria on their hands after preparing the poultry. This food-borne illness causing bacteria may

be transmitted by the hands to other foods, if the hands are not washed in between; or other disease-causing organisms may be transmitted to food from hands, if an employee fails to wash hands after using the bathroom.

Why, then, on routine inspections, do the health inspectors so often find hand soap and hand towels unavailable at employee hand wash sinks and rest room sinks, or malfunctioning faucets that

either do not provide hot water or do not provide an adequate flow of water, so that employees can

(See Of Course!, page 4)



Hepatitis

(Continued from page 3)

No employee should be handling food if he or she is experiencing diarrhea or fever. (Many diseases other than *Hepatitis A* may be transmitted through food by ill food handlers.) If you, as manager, are unsure if an employee should be excluded from work, give the Health Department a call. Our communicable disease specialist and our public health nurses will be happy to work with you to determine the best course of action for the employee.

If *Hepatitis A* is suspected, a blood test is needed to determine whether or not the employee is actually positive for the disease. A Health Department employee will draw the blood and take care of the testing at no cost to you or the employee.

This type of communication between the food establishment and the Health Department can result in several benefits to the food establishment:

- The most obvious benefit of early recognition of a communicable disease such as *Hepatitis A* and early communication with the Health Department is that we have the best chance of preventing disease transmission to your customers. A large disease outbreak can be financially devastating to a food establishment.

- If an infected food handler did transmit *Hepatitis A* virus through the food to customers, there is still time to treat the customers with Immune Globulin to prevent the onset of *Hepatitis A*, if it is quickly reported to us.

- If, despite all efforts, some disease transmission does occur and customers become ill, the Health Department can relay to the press or interested attorneys that the food establishment in question did *everything possible* to cooperate and control the outbreak. Obviously, if an estab-

lishment tried to hide an illness, we could not offer these words of support.

- A final benefit to the food establishment from communication with the Health Department is that your employees will have a greater awareness of how disease is transmitted and the importance of good hygiene and hand washing—which will result in safer food handling.

The goal of the Health Department is exactly the same as the goal of the food establishment: to provide safe food to the public. The more frequent the communication is between us, the greater the chance our mutual goal will be achieved. ♦



OF COURSE!

(Continued from page 3)

properly wash their hands? Too often, also, the health inspectors find something piled in front of, or in, the hand wash sinks so that they are inaccessible for use.

Perhaps the reason we frequently encounter these violations is that hand washing is so basic, so routine that it is old news; it is not stressed the way it should be on a daily basis, and its importance is forgotten. That

the soap and towels are gone is an indication that employees are using them—when available; however, they *must* be available at all times. In a suspected food-borne illness investigation, one of the first assessments we make is the state of hand washing in the establishment. An establishment that consistently maintains its hand washing supplies and enforces thorough hand washing among its employees should easily pass our hand washing assessment. If an establishment is not maintaining its hand washing supplies, there are lots of questions that need to be addressed—and, indeed, there is more of a chance a food-borne illness actually did occur.

The facts are these:

- Bacteria are always present on our hands.
- Most of the bacteria on our hands (millions) are found underneath our fingernails.
- Long nails will harbor more bacteria than short nails.
- 91% of *Shigella* outbreaks, 96% of *Hepatitis A* outbreaks, 78% of *Norwalk Virus* outbreaks and 100% of *Giardia* outbreaks were caused by poor personal hygiene (food-borne outbreaks). (From *Journal of Food Protection*, Vol. 53, September 1990.)

- Thorough hand washing with a soapy fingernail brush, plenty of lather and lots of flowing water, followed by drying with disposable paper towels, will significantly reduce the number of bacteria on the hands and the subsequent possibility that food-borne bacteria will be transmitted to the public. ♦

Vital Statistics

November 1, 1991 - March 31, 1992

Food and drink establishments
changing owners 34

Food and drink establishments
going out of business 11

New food and drink establish-
ments opened 27

Consumer complaints on food
establishments 63

Food and drink establishments
referred to City Attorney
due to non-correction
of violations 9

Safety Alert!

Every two weeks a child drowns in a 5-gallon bucket

Five-gallon containers are common in restaurants and retail food stores, and when they are empty they make great buckets to use around the home for storage, cleaning jobs or whatever. However, a recent finding by the U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission and the Coalition for Consumer Safety concerning these buckets is startling. Every two weeks, one child drowns in one of these 5-gallon buckets. The coalition has available a free brochure and stickers to attach to the buckets to help educate the public and prevent these tragic accidents. Further information may be obtained by calling:

1-800-BUCKET-5

Keeping Clean

(Continued from page 1)

water onto one hand at a time in an effort to wash their hands; we have seen buckets of water that get filthier as the day goes on; and we have seen plugged-in coffee pots full of water so hot that it would scald your hands if you tried to wash with it—to name a few.

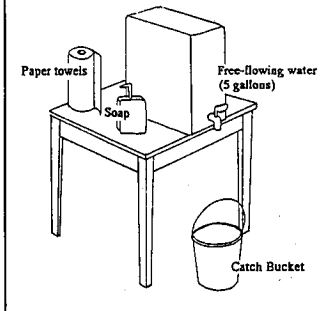
What we are after is an effective, efficient and sanitary method of washing the hands of food handlers to help prevent transmission of food-borne disease. Health Department requirements for temporary restaurant handwashing include hot, free-falling water, soap, paper towels and catch basins.

There are many types of beverage servers available that work well to provide free-falling water. These beverage servers come in various sizes, but we require a minimum of 5 gallons of water for handwashing. These containers are also insulated so that they will maintain hot temperatures well for several hours, and they have a faucet that can be locked open to allow a food handler to wash both hands in the stream of water as it flows to the catch basin.

The food operator should fill up the handwash container with hot water (but not too hot to use) and set the container on a table with a pail or other catch basin under the container. Hand soap (preferably from

a pump container) should sit next to the handwash container along with single-use paper towels (see diagram). This entire set-up must be placed convenient to the food operation. We have also seen very good handwash stations placed so far away from the action that they are never used.

Proper Set-up Temporary Restaurant Employee Handwashing Station



An effective handwashing station and the knowledge that your employees are using it will go a long way toward ensuring that your customers receive safe food. ♦

What's on Your Mind? Letters to the Editor Invited

What's on your mind? We would like to encourage you to send us your comments or questions regarding this newsletter or any other pertinent matter related to your food establishment. We will publish your letters as space allows and respond to your questions. This is your opportunity to present issues for discussion that have an impact on all food establishments and to have direct communication with all food operators in Madison.

We look forward to hearing from you.



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