

All About Food

New Inspection Forms

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Many of you have noticed that in the fall, the Food Service Operation (FSO) and Retail Food Establishment (RFE) inspection reports were different from the reports used earlier in the year. On September 1, 2018, Ohio Department of Health and Ohio Department of Agriculture required local health departments to begin using the new Food Service Operation and Retail Food Establishment Inspection Reports. The new reports were revised to match the inspection reports used by FDA and are much more detailed.

The old inspection reports listed sections of the Ohio Uniform Food Code 3717-1 and if there was a violation under that portion of the code, it was checked on the form and violation written. On the

new form the code is broken down by items numbers and violations are noted by checking on the form that the FSO or RFE is either in or out of compliance for that specific item number. If it is out of compliance, the item number, code section and priority level (critical or non-critical) is noted on the form along with the written violation. Since there are 66 item numbers on the new inspection report, not all of these may be applicable to your FSO or RFE and will be marked N/A under the Compliance Status. Also, if your FSO or RFE routinely conducts one of the item numbers listed such as reheating or cooling, but it is not observed during the inspection, it will be marked N/O for not observed.

Risk Level IV FSOs have always had Critical Control

Point Inspections and Risk Level IV RFEs have always had Process Reviews in addition to the 2 standard inspections conducted every year. Most inspectors conduct these inspections at the same time, but used separate forms for the CCP and Process Review. The new inspection report is now used for all inspections so there will only be one report even though there may be 2 inspections conducted at the same time if your FSO or RFE is a Risk Level IV.

As always, when inspections are completed, the inspector will review the report with you. Please feel free to ask any questions regarding the new form at this time. We will be happy to explain anything that you don't understand or is of a concern to your FSO or RFE.

Special points of interest:

- Food Safety Training will be held Tuesday February 19, 2019 from 10:00 am to 12:00 pm, at the Vinton County Community Building 31935 State Route 93, McArthur, Ohio
- FSO and RFE license applications and fees are due to Vinton County Health Department before March 1, 2019

Handwashing

It can never be stressed enough the importance of handwashing in an FSO or RFE. Good handwashing greatly reduces the potential for the spread of germs to food from a food worker. In fact, most foodborne outbreaks are the result of food becoming con-

taminated from a food worker and could have been prevented.

Hands, as well as exposed portions of the arms should be washed thoroughly at a designated handwash sink when the food employee arrives at

work, before putting on gloves, begins any food preparation, begins working with any exposed food or using clean equipment or utensils. Hands and arms must be thoroughly washed again after using the restroom, coughing or sneezing, using a tissue, after eating or

Handwashing Continued



drinking, using tobacco, handling soiled equipment or utensils, mopping or sweeping

floors, during food prep when changing tasks, after touching the face or hair or conducting any activity where contamination can occur.

Hand sanitizers do not take the place of handwashing. Alcohol based or other approved sanitizers may be used in an FSO or RFE, but only in between regular handwashing. For example, if a food worker is running the cash register and is asked to refill a beverage a hand sanitizer may be used in this instance. However, handwashing should occur prior to returning to food prep. Some of the highly scented hand sanitizers have been known to leave a residue on food

causing its own form of contamination.

There is also the misconception that as long gloves are worn it is safe to work with food and handwashing is not necessary. This is simply not true. Gloves get dirty just like hands and must be changed often or any time there is risk they have become contaminated. For example, if you are preparing raw meat for cooking and then begin cutting vegetables for a salad without first washing your hands and changing gloves, cross contamination of the vegetables with the raw meat has occurred. Gloves are great and further help reduce the spread of germs to food but used improperly they can become a dangerous source of contamination. Always wash hands and change gloves whenever there is the risk that the gloves have become contaminated or could cause cross contamination.

Food employees must also consider his or her fingernails. Long and/or rough nails can become a source for potential contamination of food. Nails must be kept trimmed and filed so the edges and surfaces are smooth and cleanable. Nail polish or artificial nails may not be worn when working with exposed foods unless clean, intact gloves are worn at all times.

A potential source of contamination from hands that is often overlooked is jewelry. Except for a plain wedding band or medical alert bracelet that is worn in a manner that does not pose a risk to food, no jewelry may be worn on the arms or hands during any type of food prep.

When food employees follow these simple rules, the risk of food-borne illness caused from food worker contamination greatly decreases.

Food Safety Myths

Just about everything has a myth or two associated with it. Even food safety. The truth behind some of the more common food safety myths may even be surprising. Here are a few of those myths exposed:

Myth 1: Thawing meat on the counter is acceptable because the bacteria were killed when the meat was frozen. **Truth:** First, there are types of bacteria that can withstand freezing and thawing. As the meat thaws those bacteria begin to grow, especially as it approaches room temperature. The outer portion of the meat may be at room temperature for

some time while the inner portion is still partially frozen. This creates an environment for bacteria to thrive. See 3717-1-3.4 of the Uniform Food Safety Code for the proper methods of thawing.

Myth 2: Rinsing the natural juices from meat, poultry and seafood rids it of bacteria. **Truth:** Actually, rinsing meat, poultry and seafood with water can increase the chances of spreading harmful bacteria by the splash of the juices and any bacteria it may contain onto clean equipment and prep areas. The best way to control bacteria in these

products is to cook them to the proper temperature for the required amount of time.

Myth 3: Once food is cooked all of the bacteria is killed from the high temperatures. **Truth:** Although proper cooking is the best way to control any bacteria present, unfortunately, there are bacteria that are resistant to heat. If the temperature of the cooked product is permitted to fall below 140 F, these bacteria can grow rapidly. Keeping cooked foods in hot holding at or above the proper holding temperature is critical for controlling bacterial growth.

Food Safety Myths Continued

See 3717-1-3.3 of the Uniform Food Safety Code for proper cooking temperatures.

Myth 4: Fruits and vegetables that are to be peeled, do not need to be washed first. **Truth:** First, you must cut into the peel to remove it. Then as the item is peeled the knife becomes contaminated by the unwashed peel and spreads any germs on the outside to the inside surface. All fruits and vegetables must be thoroughly washed prior to any prep.

Myth 5: The stronger a sanitizer is,

the better it kills bacteria. **Truth:** Actually, there is no advantage to using a stronger sanitizer than required. In fact, sanitizers that are too strong and used to sanitize dishes and utensils after washing and rinsing, can leave a residue on the clean items. The residue can be transferred to food causing chemical contamination. See 3717-1-4.4 of the Uniform Food Safety Code for the proper sanitizer strengths.

This is just a few of the many food safety myths that are out there. If

you are unsure about what is safe or what is not, please contact Vinton County Health Department or refer to the Uniform Food Safety Code.



Deli Slicer Cleaning and Maintenance

Deli slicers are commonly used in retail food establishments and delis to slice meats and cheeses and are difficult to clean and sanitize when new and especially so when they are older. If all surfaces are not properly cleaned and sanitized, contamination can occur increasing the risk of a foodborne illness. In fact, recent outbreaks have been associated with deli slicers from the buildup of food debris and bacterial growth due to improper cleaning and sanitizing.

There are many seams between the connected parts and components of a typical deli slicer. These are sealed with sealants and gaskets that can become degraded after extended use. As these degrade, spaces develop that can trap food debris and moisture. Since most deli slicers are used at room temperature, this creates a very favorable environment for bacterial growth. The most common areas in which this occurs is at the ring guard mount, blade guard

and slicer handle. These areas should receive special attention when cleaning and sanitizing the unit. Section 3717-1-4.5 (B) 3 of the Ohio Uniform Food Safety Code states that equipment, if used with time/temperature controlled food, equipment food-contact surfaces and utensils shall be cleaned throughout the day at least every 4 hours. Section 3717-1-4.5 (I) states that if washing in sink compartments or a ware washing machine is impractical, because the equipment is fixed or too large, equipment shall be disassembled as necessary to allow detergent solution to reach all parts. This includes rinsing and sanitizing as well. The Health Department inspectors may ask you to demonstrate the procedure used for cleaning and sanitizing the slicer during inspections.

Simply wiping down a slicer to remove visible debris is never a substitute for properly cleaning and sanitizing. Also, make it part of the pre-cleaning routine to examine seams, seals and gaskets while

the unit is still assembled. If a gasket is broken, missing, unattached, defective or otherwise not doing what it is intended, remove the slicer from service and contact the manufacturer for a repair or replacement of the part.

Always have deli slicers professionally serviced according to the manufacturer's recommended instructions. Make sure the service includes examination of all seams and routine replacement of seals and gaskets. Also, servicing may require that components be removed and then reattached with the proper reapplication sealant or gaskets. Test the slicer, before putting into service, after any maintenance to ensure that all parts are functioning properly. After testing, wash, rinse and sanitize and then it is ready to go.



Food Safety Word Search



31927 St. Rt. 93
McArthur, Ohio 45651

Phone: 740-596-0473

Fax: 740-596-5837

E-mail:

moakley@vintonohhealth.org

E-mail:

isimonton@vintonohhealth.org

B T A E H E R G Y S P T H A W O T R
G A Z F K M T E S V I R U S A L E C
H L C W S A C R I V S H P D S Q M F
E P J T H E R M O M E T E R H D P S
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AIR GAP	COOLING	GERMS	HAT	PREPARATION	SANITIZE	THERMOMETER
BACTERIA	E COLI	GLOVES	HAZARD	REHEAT	SEPARATE	UTENSILS
CLEAN	FOOD	HAIR NET	HOT HOLDING	RINSE	TEMPERATURE	VIRUS
COOK	FREEZE	HANDS	HYGIENE	SAFETY	THAW	WASH

Annual Food Safety Training

The Vinton County Health Department will be hosting food safety training for Vinton County Food Service Operations (FSO) and Retail Food Establishments (RFE) workers on Tuesday February 19, 2019 from 10:00 am to 12:00 pm at the Vinton County Community Building, 31935 State Route 93, McArthur, OH.

The training topic will cover the most

frequently found violations in local FSOs and RFEs. The training will review the proper methods for correcting these violations and how to keep them from occurring.

If you or anyone in your FSO or RFE is interested in attending, please contact the Vinton County Health Department at (740) 596-0473 to have your name added to the list.

"Food Safety, what you don't know could hurt you"

