Fall 2016, Volume 8 Issue 2

Food for thought

A newsletter for Fairfax County food establishment owners and operators and their employees

2016 Food Regulations Update!

Virginia Department of Health recently updated its food regulations to include the following:

1. The term "potentially hazardous food" was changed to "time/temperature for safety" (TCS) food to better reflect the nature of the food;
2. Cut leafy greens – lettuce, cabbage, kale and others – were added to the list of TCS foods that require time and temperature control;
3. Employees must be aware of food allergens and their dangers;
4. Salmonella (nontyphoidal) has been added to the Big Five to make the Big Six list of infections that food service employees must report to the person in charge;
5. The establishment must have procedures in place to respond to a vomiting or diarrheal event in the food establishment;
6. Wild mushrooms cannot be sold without approval from the Health Department;
7. Bare hand contact with ready-to-eat (RTE) food ingredients may be allowed if the food is going to be sufficiently heated before service;
8. Requirements for cooking raw animal foods using a non-continuous cooking method are specified;
9. Undercooked ground meat may not be offered on a children's menu;
10. Food establishments using reduced oxygen packing (ROP) methods must provide a HACCP Plan to the Health Department before using the ROP method;
11. Thawing requirements for fish that has been packaged using a reduced oxygen packaging method are specified.

These changes are based on improved science for determining how to keep food safe. Fairfax County Health Department recommends that these ***best food safety practices*** be added to your food safety practices, as they apply. If you have any questions, please call 703-246-2444, TTY 711.

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www.fairfaxcounty.gov/hd/food

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Active Managerial Control Awardees Recognized

Congratulations to the following operators who were recognized with Active Managerial Control awards! During a recent inspection there were no violations cited and it was observed that good active managerial controls were in place:

- **Tammy Brewer**, *Fairfax County Employees' Child Care, Fairfax*
- **Jose Urquilla & Diane Rosado**, *Legal Seafoods Restaurant, McLean*
- **Kelli Robertson & Machelle Miller**, *PRS, Inc. - Tysons, McLean*
- **Nicola Willis-Jones**, *The Pure Pasty Company, Vienna*
- *Also recognized were managers from Five Guys Burgers and Fries, Centreville and Café Muse, Annandale.*

See pictures and read details about how they are reducing the risk of foodborne illness in their food establishment on the Health Department website. If you have questions about active managerial control in your food establishment, please speak to your area inspector.

Restaurants at Temporary Food Events

On occasion, a food service establishment may participate in a temporary food event such as a street fair or a celebration in one of the towns or cities of Fairfax County. When preparing and selling food at one of these events, good food safety practices are still required. Some of the basic requirements are:

1. Hand washing station with water, soap and paper towels;
2. Overhead protection for the food preparation area;
3. A means of hot and cold holding. Hot items must be held at 135ºF or more and cold items must be held at 41ºF or less.

Although a permitted food establishment does not need a Temporary Food Establishment Permit to participate in a temporary event, page two of the application for a permit does give a full list of what is required of any food vendor at an event. This information is available at www.fairfaxcounty.gov/hd/food/foodpdf/temp-food-application.pdf.pdf. If you have any questions about your participation in a temporary food event, please call the Health Department at 703-246-8444, TTY 711.

National Food Safety Month!

September was National Food Safety Month, which is sponsored by the National Restaurant Association. The month-long campaign is held every September to focus on the importance of food safety education for the restaurant and foodservice industry. This year's theme was "**Notorious Virus**", exploring how to protect restaurant guests from two of the leading causes of foodborne illness – Norovirus and Hepatitis A. Training activities are available in English and Spanish at www.foodsafetymonth.com.

Lead by Example

When it comes to food safety practices, food service employees learn best from the example set by the Person-In-Charge (PIC). Here are some examples of typical practices the PIC can demonstrate to his or her workers:

- Wash hands frequently and correctly.
- Do not allow bare hand contact with ready-to-eat foods.
- Monitor safe food product temperatures with a thermometer.
- Promptly refrigerate meats, poultry, dairy and egg products when delivered. Rapidly cool potentially hazardous food.
- Practice efficient date marking.
- Demonstrate the proper use of the 3-vat sink: wash, rinse and sanitize, and air dry.
- Use sanitizer test strips every day.
- Positively reinforce safe food handling techniques.
- Wash hands frequently and correctly.

Are you leading by example?

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