

Food for thought

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

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Check & Monitor Your Refrigerators

Proper refrigeration and temperature control of foods are important steps in reducing the risk of foodborne illness. This time of year, the temperature outside goes up and often the temperature in the kitchen goes up, too. This can put a strain on the refrigeration units in the kitchen. Most refrigerators are designed to run best at room temperatures **BELOW 85°F**. What can you do to keep refrigeration properly maintained in your food establishment? Is your food stored at 41°F or less to prevent the growth of foodborne bacteria? Here are three steps to help keep your refrigerators cold and the food at the safe temperature:

- Service refrigerators & freezers ahead of the hot summer season:** If a refrigerator reads 41°F two hours before opening, it is doubtful that it will keep that temperature during the busy lunch rush. Set the temperature at 35° to 37°F when the refrigerators are not in use. Check refrigerator temperatures first thing in the morning. If refrigerators are set at the correct temperature, they should keep food at 41°F or less, even during the busy times of business.

- Ensure all refrigerators have a built-in temperature gauge or an internal thermometer:** Refrigeration units under and across from the cookline can be a challenge because they may have to work harder to maintain 41°F. Check temperatures throughout the day. A temperature log is a good active managerial control that can be used to track refrigerator and food temperatures during the day. Your area inspector can help you set up a temperature log, if necessary. If food temperatures are going up, adjust the refrigerator setting and temporarily move the food to a refrigerator that will cool the food quickly and keep the proper temperature.

- Refrigerate food right away.** When food is delivered, put it in the refrigerator quickly. When left unrefrigerated, the food temperature will quickly move into the "danger zone" (41° - 135°F). In the "danger zone," foodborne bacteria can grow more quickly and possibly make people sick.

Variance for Doggie Dining in Fairfax

A food facility may request a variance for allowing pets at their establishments. Variance forms can be obtained by contacting the Plan Review Section of the Health Department at 703-246-2201. The following conditions must be met and maintained to sustain the variance:

1. Pets must be on a leash at all times, allowed only in outside patios pertaining to the restaurant and must follow all local and state animal control rules/laws/ordinances.
2. The outside patio must have an entrance and exit separate from the restaurant and pets cannot be brought through the inside of a facility to access a patio;
3. If an outside area is not completely used for pets, the area used needs to be segregated from the non-pet area;
4. A clean-up station needs to be available for use by the patrons and stocked with those items necessary for cleaning up after pets. Restaurant staff shall be prohibited from cleaning up after pets but shall maintain sanitation of dining area;
5. Outside dining area shall be "power-washed" and sanitized weekly and a log kept of when cleaning was completed;

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Tips for Correct Glove Use

- Before handling ready-to-eat foods like salads, fruits, sandwiches, cooked meats, breads etc., wash your hands with soap and warm water, dry your hands and put gloves on.
- When taking gloves from the dispenser, handle the wrist portion of the glove, not the fingertips and don't blow into the glove.
- Use gloves that fit properly and are designed for the task at hand. Use heavier safety gloves if worker protection rather than barrier protection is the goal.
- If you have any cuts or lesions on your hands make sure they are bandaged and covered before wearing gloves.
- Wash your hands and change gloves after sneezing, coughing, touching your hair, face other body parts, taking out trash, handling money, changing tasks and when they are contaminated, torn or worn out.

AMC Awardees Recognized

Congratulations to the food service operators who were recognized with an Active Managerial Control award over the last three month period! During their recent inspections, there were no violations cited and it was observed that good active managerial controls were in place. Congratulations to:

- **Luis Castillo**, Dunkin Donuts, Fairfax Blvd., Fairfax
- **Pablo Garcia & Jason Lee**, Panera Bread, Fairfax Blvd., Fairfax
- **Rodriguo Escobar**, Red Robin, Seven Corners Center, Falls Church
- **Patricia Giraldo**, Pollo Campero, Columbia Pike, Falls Church
- **Julie Fiarino, Mickael Chenal**, Neiman Marcus Café, International Drive, McLean
- **Neil Mowrey**, Hooters of Fairfax, Fairfax Blvd., Fairfax
- **Jason Herrera**, Chick Fil A at Village Commons, Reston
- **Mabel Moya**, Kentucky Fried Chicken, Little River Turnpike, Alexandria
- **Janet Thompson & Tammy Stickles**, Chantilly HS, Stringfellow Rd., Chantilly
- **Mary Reagan**, The Greene Turtle, Heneska Lp., Alexandria
- **Jenny Alvarado**, McDonalds # 14097, Richmond Highway, Lorton



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

The HD Stamp of Approval

The Fairfax County Health Department has created a new program, Safety Through Actively Managing Practices (STAMP), for restaurants that meet standards of food safety excellence. STAMP requires that restaurants have plans in place to stay on top of violations linked to foodborne illness through the use of Active Managerial Control (AMC). STAMP enrollees demonstrate AMC through an application and a Health Department review of their records and practices and by performing well on their inspections. Food service operators can apply to the STAMP program at www.fairfaxcounty.gov/health/food/awards-programs/stamp. Contact your inspector if you have any questions or would like help with your application.



Food Handler Training is Here

Fairfax County Health Department is launching a new Basic Food Handlers training class quarterly starting this summer. The first introductory class will be held at the Health Department on May 22 from 9 to 10:30 AM. The fee is \$10 which covers the cost of the training manual. The **Basic Food Handler Training** will introduce food service employees to the basics of safe food handling. This is not an alternative to the Certified Food Manager course and is tailored for food handlers and other restaurant staff who are not Certified Food Managers. Anyone preparing, serving, transporting, warehousing, stocking, or handling food in any manner should consider taking this course. For questions about this course please call 703-246-2444 or email foodsafety@fairfaxcounty.gov or speak with your area inspector.

Doggy Dining

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6. Proper signs need to be posted that alert patrons of the outside pet seating area and precautions that may need to be observed;
7. Aggression by pets of any kind will be prohibited;
8. Pets should be kept on the opposite side of the table away from where serving staff will take orders and serving food and shall not be allowed on chairs, seats, benches or tables.
9. Feeding of pets by restaurant or restaurant staff is prohibited. Water, however may be provided.
10. Handling of pets by restaurant staff is prohibited. Employees must wash their hands properly if they should come in contact with pets prior to serving food/ beverage or handling utensils.

The above conditions are variable and additional conditions may be added to protect public health. Violation of these conditions cited during inspections of the establishment may cause the Health Department to reevaluate this variance.