

Food *for thought*

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

Daily Checklist for Success

Our goal at the Health Department is to reduce the risk of foodborne illnesses. Being proactive and using active managerial control in the kitchen can significantly reduce that risk. Below are a few helpful tips for operators to follow before beginning their daily routine.

- Verify all thermometers are calibrated and reading 32° F in an ice bath.
- Check thermometers in refrigerators and verify ambient temperatures are holding at 41°F or below. For mobile operations, turn on refrigerators and allow to cool to less than 41°F before stocking with food.
- When stocking your food, keep in mind proper storage order of foods. Always store raw meat and poultry below ready to eat foods. Store raw animal foods by cooking temperature with poultry on the bottom.
- If reheating any food that day, reheat quickly and verify an internal temperature of 165°F or greater is reached before hot holding. Then ensure hot foods

are held above 135°F throughout the day.

- Verify all hand sinks are stocked with soap and dispensed paper towels.
- Screen employees for any illness. If any employee is sick with vomiting, nausea and diarrhea exclude them from work. Employees must stay home 24-48 hours after experiencing their last symptom. Remember Norovirus is a leading cause of foodborne illness. Exclusion of ill workers, proper handwashing and glove use are critical in preventing an outbreak.
- Test run the dishwasher to verify it is sanitizing properly before operation.
- Fill wiping cloth buckets and then routinely monitor them throughout the day using a test kit to ensure sanitizer solutions are at proper concentrations.

For more information speak with your health department inspector, call 703-246-2201 or visit www.fairfaxcounty.gov/health/food/operators.

Keep Those Shellstock Tags

Restaurants often serve raw molluscan shellfish*, such as oysters, clams and mussels, which are harvested from various rivers and bays. Before harvesting is allowed, the waters of the rivers and bays must be certified by state and federal regulators as safe (uncontaminated). If the waters of the bay or river become contaminated, shellstock may contain harmful bacteria or viruses, which can lead to foodborne illness.

Food service establishments play an ongoing, behind the scenes role in monitoring the shellstock source through shellstock tags.

Food service operators have two primary responsibilities:

1. The tags must be kept with the original container until the container is empty. When the container becomes empty, food service operators should note that date on the tag.

2. KEEP TAGS from empty containers for 90 days. Fairfax County Food Code requires shellstock tags be kept for 90 days after the container is empty. Containers may include cardboard boxes, bags or cans.

The shellstock tags identify the waters from which the shellfish came, when the shellfish was harvested, who harvested the

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Wash, Rinse & Sanitize *(The story of the 3-compartment sink)*

One of the most important steps in preventing the spread of foodborne illness is to wash, rinse and sanitize food contact equipment, utensils and preparation surfaces regularly. The three-compartment sink plays a very important role in this process. Each compartment (or sink) has a purpose.

1. The wash sink is used to hold the soap solution and hot water and to clean the dirt and particles left after being used.
2. The rinse sink is always the middle sink—filled with clean hot water to rinse out the soap residue.
3. Washed utensils are sanitized in the sanitize sink. Sanitizing is necessary

to reduce the number of germs on the surfaces that were washed. The water in the sanitizing sink does not need to be hot.

4. To be sanitized correctly, a washed item should be immersed in the sanitizer solution for a minimum of 10 seconds.
5. The final step to the wash process is air drying. It is best to let utensils air dry completely before storing on the shelves because hand drying increases the risk of recontamination of cleaned utensils.

The two chemicals most often used for making sanitizing solutions are chlorine (bleach) and quaternary ammonium

(Quat). These chemicals must be used in specific amounts and never mixed. A test kit is required to test for the correct concentration of the chemicals. A chlorine solution must be between 50 and 200 parts per million (ppm) chlorine. Quat has a range of acceptable concentrations; use the product according to the manufacturer's recommendations. All surfaces which come in contact with food, such as cutting boards and prep tables, should be regularly wiped down with sanitizer solution to kill germs and prevent cross-contamination. If you have questions about this process, talk to your area health department inspector for more details about setting up the three-compartment sink and sanitizer buckets.

Health Department Stamp of Approval

The Fairfax County Health Department's new recognition program, Safety Through Actively Managing Practices (STAMP), is for restaurants that meet standards of food safety excellence. Congratulations to our latest STAMP enrollee

- **Burke Center Health Care**, Burke Lake Road, Burke
- **Pei Wei**, Market Commons Drive, Fairfax
- **Hyatt Regency-Barrel & Bushel**, Tysons One Place, Tysons Corner
- **Founding Farmers**, Reston Metro Plaza, Reston

Contact your inspector if you have any questions or would like help with your application. Food service operators can learn more about the STAMP program and apply for it at www.fairfaxcounty.gov/health/food/awards-programs/stamp.



Shellstock Tags

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shellfish and who distributed the shellfish— among other information. This is important information that can be used to trace back to the harvest areas if a food-related illness occurs related to contaminated shellfish. If the trace back leads back to contaminated waters, that area may be declared off limits to further shellstock harvesting.

If a food service operator is not keeping records or incomplete records are observed by an inspector, the product is subject to impoundment and/or disposal.

If you have any questions about shellstock tags or recordkeeping methods, please check with your area inspector.

***Definition of Shellfish:** All species of (1) oysters, clams or mussels, whether: (a) shucked or in the shell; (b) raw, including post-harvest processed; (c) frozen or unfrozen; (c) whole or in part; and (2) Scallops. Shellstock means live molluscan shellfish in the shell.

Active Managerial Control Awards

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:

- **Jenny Haynesworth; Einstein Bagels**, 8317 Old Keene Mill Rd., Springfield
- **Michael Suyat; The Counter**, 11922 Democracy Drive, Reston
- **Travis Miller & Oscar Rieken; First Watch Daytime Café**, 13027 Lee Jackson Memorial Highway, Chantilly
- **Aaron Chilin, Pawan Mehera & Maricela**

Aguilar, IHOP 572, 13804 Metrotech Drive, Chantilly

- **Anil K. Dwivedy;**
Wendy's Store #6544
Reston



- **Ashwani Nigam; Taco Bell #29896,**
13800 Metrotech Drive, Chantilly

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.

