



The Quarterly Food
Safety Newsletter of
the Alexandria
Health Department

Bon Appétit

WINTER 2010

In this issue ...

Knowledge Assessment Study
Guide—Sanitization of Food Contact
Surfaces

Did you Know?

Alexandria Health Department
Environmental Health Division
4480 King Street, Suite 360
Alexandria, VA 22302
(703) 746-4910 (Office)
(703) 746-4919 (fax)
New Phone Numbers!

Knowledge Assessment Study Guide— Sanitization of Food Contact Surfaces



There are many cases of food borne illness in the United States each year. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention estimate that there are 76 million cases per year, many of them unreported. Contaminated equipment is one major cause of food borne illness, and can be easily prevented through actions taken by a well-trained staff and a knowledgeable Certified Food Manager (CFM).

Proper cleaning and sanitization of food contact surfaces is an important step in preventing contaminated equipment from causing food borne illness. During food safety assessments at your facility, the Environmental Health Specialist (EHS) will assess your knowledge about this topic. The EHS may ask you to discuss the procedures for properly washing, rinsing, and sanitizing food contact surfaces and utensils, or the EHS may ask you to demonstrate the process. Some of the questions an EHS might ask you are provided below.

How often should food contact surfaces and utensils be cleaned and sanitized?

- *Before each use with a different raw animal food*
- *Each time there is a change from working with raw foods to ready-to-eat foods.*
- *Any time that contamination may have occurred.*
- *At least every 4 hours if used with potentially hazardous food.*
- *At least every 24 hours for baking equipment.*

When cleaning and sanitizing food contact surfaces, what steps must be used?

- *The food contact surface and utensils must be washed to loosen and remove food debris.*
- *The food contact surface and utensils must be rinsed with clean water to remove chemicals and loose food debris.*
- *The food contact surface and utensils must be sanitized.*

How should food contact surfaces and utensils be cleaned?

- *Using soap or detergent in hot water (>110°F).*
- *Using brushes and scouring pads when necessary.*

How should food contact surfaces and utensils be sanitized?

- *Immersing the food contact surface or utensils in a **chlorine solution (50-100ppm) for 10 seconds.***
- *Immersing the food contact surface or utensils in a **quaternary ammonium solution (200-400ppm) for 30 seconds** (unless the label provides a different concentration and immersion time).*
- *In a heat-sanitizing dishwasher that achieves a 160°F surface temperature on the utensils and food contact surfaces.*

What methods can be used to clean and sanitize food contact surfaces and utensils?

- *3-Compartment Sink: Utensils and small equipment can be washed, rinsed, and sanitized by hand.*
- *Dishwasher: Utensils and small equipment can be precleaned by hand, and then placed into the dishwasher to be washed, rinsed and sanitized by the machine.*

What if the utensils or food contact surfaces are too large for the sink or dishwasher?

- *Items that are too large for the dishwasher or 3-compartment sink must be washed by hand. Examples of items like this are cutting boards, preparation tables, bowls for large mixers, and large pots. These items must be washed with soap, rinsed with water, and then sanitized with a sanitizing solution. The sanitizer can be applied by a spray bottle, allowed to remain on the surface, and then wiped off with a clean paper towel.*

By becoming familiar with these concepts, you can help to prevent the occurrence of food borne illness by training your employees in the proper cleaning and sanitization of food contact surfaces and utensils. The prevention of food borne illness is not only good for Public Health, but good for business!

Did you know?

There are two agencies in Virginia involved in the regulation of retail food establishments and food manufacturing: the Virginia Department of Health (VDH), and the Virginia Department of Agriculture Consumer Services (VDACS). The Alexandria Health Department is part of VDH and is responsible for enforcing the 2009 FDA Food Code in restaurants, carry-outs, convenience stores, grocery stores, and other retail food service establishments.

The Virginia Department of Agriculture's Food Safety and Security Office is responsible for enforcement of the Virginia Food Regulations, the Virginia Egg Law, the Virginia Apple Making Law, the Vinegar Law, and other related regulations at food processing and manufacturing facilities, food warehouse facilities, and grocery stores.

Much like the Alexandria Health Department, the Food Safety and Security Office enforces food safety requirements through unannounced food safety assessments, sampling of food products, investigation of consumer complaints, consultations with consumers and industry, and cooperative working relationships with other food safety agencies at the local, state, and federal level.

Ronald Orr, a Food Safety Specialist Senior, is the VDACS representative in the Alexandria area. If you have questions about regulations enforced by the Virginia Department of Agriculture, he can be reached at Ronald.Orr@vdacs.virginia.gov or (804)221-3624.