



The Quarterly Food
Safety Newsletter of
the Alexandria
Health Department

Bon Appétit

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New Phone Numbers!

Deli Slicers



Cleaning and sanitization of food-contact surfaces is an important part of food safety. This is especially true with deli slicers.

Recent outbreaks of foodborne illness have been caused by soiled deli slicers. These outbreaks have resulted in serious illness and hospitalization. You can help prevent foodborne illness outbreaks by following a few simple steps in your restaurant.

First, your deli slicer must be cleaned AND sanitized at least every four hours. This means that if you use your slicer from 8:00AM to 4:00PM, at a minimum you must clean and sanitize your slicer at 12:00PM and 4:00PM. You may have to clean the slicer more frequently if you change between raw animal foods (i.e. raw chicken) and ready-to-eat foods (i.e. deli meat)

Second, the cleaning and sanitization process must include three separate steps: (1) Cleaning with warm soapy water; (2) Rinsing with fresh water; and (3) Sanitizing with a warm sanitizing solution at the proper concentration. **Wiping down the slicer with sanitizer is not an effective substitute for washing with soap, rinsing with water, and sanitizing.**

Third, employees should examine seals, seams and gaskets to make sure they are in good condition. If an employee sees damaged seals, seams, or gaskets, the slicer should not be used again until it is repaired. Employees should also look for accumulations of food and liquid in hard-to-reach areas.

Did you know?

Lubricants used on food-contact surfaces, or on gears/bearings within equipment that has food-contact surfaces must be food grade. In other words, any lubricants used on deli slicers, soft-serve ice cream machines, meat grinders, meat saws, and dough mixers must be food grade. Using a lubricant that is NOT food grade may cause your food to become contaminated.

How can you find out if a lubricant is food grade?

1. Look at the container. Many labels will say if the lubricant is food grade.
2. Refer to "**21 CFR 178.3570 Lubricants with incidental food contact.**" This document lists lubricant ingredients that are food grade.
3. Call the Environmental Health Division (703.746.4910) and ask to speak with an Environmental Health Specialist. An Environmental Health Specialist will be happy to answer your question.

Please don't wait until you have sick customers to find out if your lubricant is food grade!