

July 2013



# **THD FOOD FOCUS**

**TULSA HEALTH DEPARTMENT** ENVIRONMENTAL PUBLIC HEALTH

 Visit us online at [www.tulsa-health.org/food-safety](http://www.tulsa-health.org/food-safety)

## **Food Allergies**

Each year, millions of Americans have allergic reactions to food. Food allergies can cause severe reactions and may even be life-threatening. A food allergy is an immune system response to a food that the body mistakenly believes is harmful. The body believes a particular protein in the food is harmful and reacts to try and destroy it.

The eight foods that account for 90 percent of all food allergic reactions are: milk, eggs, peanuts, tree nuts (walnuts, cashew, etc.), fish, shellfish, soy, and wheat. There is no cure for food allergies. Currently the only way to treat food allergies is to avoid the food that triggers the reactions.

If you are serving customers with food allergies it is important to prevent contact between the allergen and the customer's food. Communication is crucial if a customer mentions that they have a food allergy. Contact a member of management or an employee that is knowledgeable about food allergens to help the customer make informed decisions when they order. Remember to avoid cross contact of the food allergen which may be transferred by unclean hands or utensils, preparation surfaces, fryer vats and even garnished. Lastly, if you do not know if a certain dish contains and allergen ingredient, say so.

Food service workers should be aware of the following common symptoms of an allergic reaction and be prepared to call for medical help if necessary.

- Swelling of the tongue and throat
- Difficulty breathing
- Hives
- Abdominal cramps and vomiting
- Diarrhea
- Loss of consciousness, and even death

### **About Other Allergens**

Persons may still be allergic to and have serious reactions to foods other than the eight foods identified by the law. So, always be sure to read the food label's ingredient list carefully to avoid the food allergens in question.

*Source: US Food and Drug Administration*

## **City License Renewals Due**

License Renewal Applications ( or business license) for those operating in Tulsa, Bixby, and Broken Arrow have been mailed to you via the U.S. Postal Service. After you receive your application, you must mail or take the application along with the indicated fee to the location listed on the application. Tulsa and Bixby also require a copy of your sales tax to be included with the application and must match the owner information on the application.

If you have not received your renewal application or if your application contains wrong information, call our office at 918.595.4300 for a corrected application.

Remember City Licenses expire on June 30th. Please have your business license purchased by July 1st. The penalty for late purchase is 50% of the fee.

## **Food Waiver Test Available**

The Food Safety Waiver Test is available each month as an alternative to re-attending the class training. The Waiver Test is comprehensive and intended for those individuals that have knowledge in proper food safety practices. Please note that that technical assistance or instruction will not be provided. After passing the Test, a food employee permit will be issued that will be valid for three years from the date of the test. If you do not pass the Waiver Test, you will be given a retest card and be required to attend a regular food safety training class before the retest card expires.

The Food Safety Waiver Test is only offered once per month at the Eastgate Metroplex Training Center (please refer to the attached schedule). Registration is on the test date you choose and is limited to the first 50 participants (no pre-registration). The cost for the Test and permit is \$13.00.

## Top Ten Priority and Priority Foundation Violations

1. Food contact surfaces of equipment & utensils clean — Violation 33
2. Toxic substances properly identified, stored, used — Violation 30
3. Person In Charge present, demonstration of knowledge, performs duties — Violation 2
4. Cold holding temperatures; received at proper temperature — Violation 21
5. Date marking and disposition — Violation 22
6. Food separated, protected, Proper tasting procedures; Self-service; Single-service — Violation 11
7. Warewashing, sanitize equipment; Deisgn, supplies, operated; Test strips; Temp gauges; Alarms — Violation 31
8. Hot holding temps; received at proper temperature — Violation 20
9. Warewashing; Sanitize at ppm/temp — Violation 32
10. Insects, rodents & other pests control — Violation 16

## Activities For Six-Month Period

Food inspections conducted	4,764
Special Events/Inspections	300
Food facilities opened	240
Plans reviewed	108
Volunteer Workers Food Safety Class Participants	1,166
Food Safety Class Participants	11,537
Managers Certificates	727

