



## Let us know how we're doing!

Visit our confidential web-based survey at:

<http://www.tulsa-health.org/food-safety/food-service-industry/>

### Organizing your refrigeration space

You can cut food costs, save labor, and most importantly, reduce foodborne illness by following these food storage organizing tips.

- **Separate** — designate sections of refrigeration units for raw and ready-to-eat foods (RTE) in order to minimize the chances of cross contamination. Use space wisely. If possible, dedicate one rack of shelves to RTE foods and another to raw foods. At the very least, follow the top-to-bottom shelf order (see Storage Order article).
- **Don't overload** — overloading refrigeration units is taxing on its cooling units and prevents good air circulation.
- **Check temperatures** — place refrigerator thermometers in different locations throughout (by the door, in the middle, toward the back, etc.). You will find that temperatures vary in different parts of the refrigerator and that temperatures are warmer toward the door and coldest towards the back. The best storage strategy is to store meats, poultry, fish and dairy products toward the back, and produce closer to the front.
- **Shelve it** — in walk-in coolers, shelving should start at least 6 inches off the floor. Never stack food all the way to the ceiling; this will restrict air flow.
- **Circulation** — don't line shelving in your refrigerators. Lining shelves blocks the circulation needed for proper cooling.
- **Box it** — remove boxes when possible by transferring food into secondary containers.
- **Label it** — label individual food items to avoid confusion and rotate use of products. Label should include the type of food, the date on which the item was placed in storage, and the date by which it must be used. Remember FIFO (first-in-first-out).

### Storage Order

RTE that will not be cooked or cooked further, like salad ingredients, dairy items, desserts, and cooked meats, should always be stored above raw foods.

Store items with the lowest minimum cooking temperatures above those with higher minimum cook temps. For example:

- fish/seafood (145 °F), store above
- whole cuts of raw beef and pork, store above
- raw ground beef and pork (155 °F), store above
- raw poultry (165 °F), store on the bottom

### Would you know what to do?

Power outage is just one of many natural disasters or other conditions that are considered an imminent health hazard and need immediate attention. You should develop a plan that will best protect your food supply and ultimately your customer's health. You should cease operations and call the Tulsa Health Department at 595-4300 if any of the following happen:

- Power outage for more than 4 hours
- Fire or flood
- Sewage backup
- No hot water
- Unable to keep hot foods hot and cold foods cold
- Large number of insects or evidence of rodents in establishment
- Interruption of safe potable water supply to the facility
- Misuse of poisonous or toxic materials
- Onset of an apparent foodborne illness outbreak
- Severe structural damage in the facility
- An employee working with Salmonella, Shigella, E. coli O157:H7, Norovirus or Hepatitis A infections
- Gross unsanitary conditions
- Any other event that would endanger the health of your customers

### Employee Illness Reminders:

Don't work with hands-on preparation of food, clean and sanitized food contact surfaces, and/or single use items if you have:

- **Open wounds.** Cover with a double, water-proof barrier such as a finger cot or water-tight bandage with plastic gloves then continue to work with food.
- **Vomiting, diarrhea or jaundice.** Do not return to work until at least 24 hours after the symptoms cease.
- **Persistent sneezing, coughing, or a runny nose that causes discharges from the eyes, nose, or mouth.** Flu viruses are spread mainly from person to person. People may become infected by touching something a food worker may have touched and then touching their mouth or nose.

Spread of H1N1 virus is thought to occur in the same way that seasonal flu spreads. The symptoms of H1N1 flu virus include fever, cough, sore throat, runny or stuffy nose, body aches, headache, chills and fatigue. A significant number of people who have been infected with this virus also have reported diarrhea and vomiting. Severe illnesses and death has occurred as a result of illness associated with this virus.

People infected with seasonal and H1N1 flu shed virus and may be able to infect others from 1 day before getting sick to 5 to 7 days after.

**Please discuss your sick reporting policy with your employees.**

# Getting to Know Your Inspector: James Travis Splawn

**Education:**

B.S. in Biology from Oklahoma State University

**Years of service:**

almost 2 years

**Favorite local team:**

Oklahoma State Cowboys

**Hobbies or favorite pastime:**

Reading, baseball, and pets

**Favorite meal:**

Meatloaf

**Favorite movie:**

The Shawshank Redemption

**Favorite style of music:**

Hard Rock

**What I like most about my job:**

Getting to do something different each day.



Disclaimer: The inspector featured here is NOT necessarily your inspector. Your inspector will be featured eventually in one of the upcoming newsletters.

## Sanitizing Factoid

Scented bleach contains less than half the bleach of regular bleach. Some brands of bleach offer scented disinfectants but these only contain 2.75% sodium hypochlorite whereas, regular bleach generally contains 6%. For this reason, do not use scented bleach for your sanitizing solutions.

The recommended chlorine concentration is between 50 ppm and 100 ppm (parts per million) for sanitizing food contact surfaces like pans or clean utensils. This is about 1 teaspoon of regular bleach per gallon of water. The maximum concentration that should ever be used is 200 ppm, which is about one tablespoon of regular chlorine bleach per gallon of water. Always use test strips to determine correct concentrations. Depending on the concentration and organic load, sanitizer contact times of 1 to 5 minutes are usually sufficient to thoroughly kill germs.

And remember that equipment or articles sanitized with bleach solution must be allowed to drain adequately before contact with food.

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