

Flu Seasoning Is Coming!

Everyone should be on alert when it comes to safe food handling practices. The flu is spread, mainly through the cough or sneeze droplets of an ill person. These germs are then transferred through the air or via hands of the ill workers onto surfaces or people nearby. Flu germs can also survive for up to 2 hours or longer on hard surfaces (door knobs, tables, phones, etc.). Owners and managers please be proactive by educating your employees. If your employee has the flu, they should stay at home for 24 hours after the fever is gone without the use of medication.

Below are a few recommendations for your staff so that they may better battle the coming flu season.

- Wash hands thoroughly after contamination occurs. Remember to lather hands with soap for 20 seconds and then rinse with warm water.
- Clean and sanitize all work surfaces to reduce the contamination of food through environmental surfaces such as tables and cutting boards.
- Always cover your mouth and nose when you sneeze or cough.
- Avoid touching your nose, eyes, or mouth.
- Avoid going to work if you're sick and have a fever.

Owners/managers should send ill workers home. Remember that each individual is the best line of defense against the flu bug. Although you may recover from the flu easily, only your healthy habits will protect others!

Owasso Food Safety Class - Location Changed!

Starting in January 2015, classes in Owasso will be held at the Owasso Community Center located at 301 South Cedar, Owasso, Oklahoma. Temporary permits will still be purchased at the Collinsville Health Center at 12th & Center St. on Monday through Wednesday. Please see attached schedule for dates. (The classes were previously held at the Tulsa Technology Owasso.)

Vermin Control

Fall is just around the corner and that means colder weather. It is time to protect your facility from unwanted visitors. The USDA, United States Department of Agriculture, has stated that food contamination from mice causes billions of dollars in damages each year. These damages are mostly caused from mouse droppings, hair, and urine. In order to limit the occurrence of "unwanted visitors" we recommend the following tips:

- Keep all doors and windows closed.
- Seal all exterior holes and cracks.
- Take trash out regularly, no stacking.
- Keep all outer openings in good condition.
- Close all lids on outside trash and grease containers.
- Repair leaky plumbing.
- Watch deliveries for "unwanted visitors" or signs of infestation.
- Contract with a certified pest control operator to develop a pest control plan for your facility.

Top 10 Priority & Priority Foundation Violations

Order	Violation #	Violation Description	Times Marked
1	33	Food Contact surfaces of equipment & utensils clean	1,593
2	7	Adequate hand washing facilities; Toilets supplied	845
3	21	Cold holding temps; food received at proper temp.	720
4	30	Toxic substances properly identified, stored, used	690
5	2	Person In Charge; demonstration of knowledge	652
6	22	Date marking and disposition	641
7	16	Insects, rodents, & other pests controlled	566
8	32	Warewashing; Sanitize	421
9	11	Food separated/protected; Tasting procedures; Self-Serve operations	373
10	31	Warewashing, sanitize equipment: Design, supplies, operated; Test strips; Temp gauges	363

Myth Buster

Myth

Cross-contamination doesn't happen in the refrigerator — it is too cold in there for germs to survive!

Fact

Some bacteria can survive and even grow in cool, moist environments like the refrigerator. In fact, *Listeria Monocytogenes* grow at temperatures as low as 35°F! A recent study from NSF International revealed that the refrigerator produce compartment was one of the “germiest” places in the kitchen, containing *Salmonella* and *Listeria*. In your refrigerator, keep fresh fruits and vegetables separate from raw meat, poultry, seafood, and eggs. Clean your refrigerator regularly with hot water and soap and clean up food and beverage spills immediately to reduce the risk of cross-contamination in your refrigerator. Don't forget to clean refrigerator walls and undersides of shelves.

Source

Partnership for Food Safety Education, September 2014.

Waiver Test Available

The Waiver Test is comprehensive and intended for individuals that have knowledge in proper food safety practices. Please note that this testing process is performed without instruction or technical assistance. After passing the test, a food handler permit will be issued that will be valid for three years from the date of the test. Individuals that don't pass the Waiver Test on their first attempt will be given a retest card and be required to attend a regular THD food handler class before their retest card expires.

The Waiver test is only offered once per month (please refer to the attached schedule).

