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CREATING RAVING
FANS BY DELIVERING
WORLD CLASS
SERVICE

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FOOD FOR THOUGHT

Spring 2012, Issue 5

High Risk Populations



High-risk populations are groups of individuals who are at higher risk of becoming sick as the result of a foodborne pathogen. These groups include children, the elderly, pregnant women, and people with suppressed immune systems. When preparing food for these groups you should follow some key food safety guidelines:

- Practice good personal hygiene: Wash hands with soap and hot water before, during, and after food preparation. Wear gloves after washing hands.

- Cook foods adequately: Use a thermometer to ensure that meats and poultry are cooked to safe temperatures. Eggs should be cooked until both white and yolk are firm. At 160° F, most food pathogens are killed.
- Avoid cross-contamination: Wash hands, knives, and cutting boards thoroughly after cutting meats and poultry. Keep ready to eat foods separate from raw foods and clean food preparation surfaces with approved sanitizing solutions.
- Keep foods at safe temperatures: Keep cold food at or below 40° F, keep hot food at or above 135° F, use an appliance thermometer to make sure the cooling equipment is working properly, and thaw foods in the refrigerator, under running cold tap water, or in a microwave oven.
- Avoid risky food and water: Unpasteurized milk and juices, raw seafood, foods that contain raw eggs, unwashed fresh produce, and water that may be contaminated.

Chemical Foodborne Illness



A chemical foodborne illness is caused by contamination of food by chemicals such as pesticides, cleaning agents, and the use of improper containers for cooking or storing food. Drugs and pesticides are used in agriculture to control pests in fruits and vegetables. These chemicals, when ingested in large amounts, can

cause serious health problems. All chemicals and cleaning agents should be carefully labeled and stored in an area separate from foods. Galvanized containers should never be used for storage of acid foods such as lemonade and tomatoes. To prevent the possibility of chemical foodborne illness from pesticides, all fresh

fruits and vegetables should be washed thoroughly. Some chemicals are harmless when present in small amounts, but have caused severe illness or death when eaten in large quantities. Pay attention while preparing food. And Remember: **WHEN IN DOUBT, THROW IT OUT!!!!**

Grease Trap Tips

- Grease traps in the City of Grand Prairie must be pumped according to their established frequency.
- The maintenance frequency of grease traps is shown on the health permit issued to each facility.
- Only use liquid waste haulers permitted by the city.
- The gold copy (transport receipt) should be given to the food service manager.
- The pink copy (disposal receipt) should be returned to you from the transporter within 15 days.
- The establishment must keep both copies for at least 2 years and must be available for inspection at all times.



The Danger Zone

Bacteria and other harmful germs need time, food, right temperature, and moisture (or wetness) to grow; but they won't grow when the temperature of the food is **colder than 40° F or hotter than 140° F**. The range between these temperatures is known as the "Danger Zone." In this zone bacteria grow most rapidly doubling in number in as little as 20 minutes. That's why the FDA and USDA advise consumers to never leave food out of refrigeration over 2 hours. If the temperature is above 90 °F, food should not be left out for more than 1 hour.

Handling Food

- Wash hands.
- No barehand contact. Use barriers such as tongs, papers, spoons or gloves to prepare and serve ready-to-eat foods.
- Get the food to be fixed from storage, the stove, the cooler or freezer. Take a little food out at a time, and keep the rest hot or cold until you are ready to work with it. Prepare potentially hazardous foods just before you need them.
- Don't let the temperature of the food stay in the "Danger Zone."

Is It Done Yet?

You can't tell by looking. Use a food thermometer to be sure.

USDA Recommended Safe Minimum Internal Temperatures						
						
Steaks & Roasts 145 °F	Fish 145 °F	Pork 160 °F	Ground Beef 160 °F	Egg Dishes 160 °F	Chicken Breasts 165 °F	Whole Poultry 165 °F

Excluding Employees From The Workplace

It is important to ensure that your employees are healthy enough to safely prepare and serve food. Occasionally an employee must be excluded from working with or preparing food. In the State of Texas, it is the responsibility of the person in charge to require reporting by his or her employees of any diseases that are transmissible through food. Foodborne illnesses include: Norovirus, hepatitis A virus, Salmonella typhi, Shigella, or shiga toxin-producing E. coli. Additionally, if an employee experiences vomiting, diarrhea, jaundice (yellowing of the skin and/or eyes), or sore throat with fever, that employee should not be permitted to work until cleared by a licensed physician. Employees with open sores or wounds should not work with food unless the lesion is covered by a dry, durable, tight-fitting bandage.



Food Handler Cards

Employees who handle food products or utensils must obtain a food handler card. The cards must be obtained within 45 days of the person's hire date.

Food handler certificates from other cities and state approved courses are accepted, however, those certificates must be replaced with a City of Grand Prairie certificate for class attendance exemption. A \$15.00 fee is required when proper documentation such as driver's license, birth certificate, Texas ID, consular identification, and proof of food handling training is provided. There is a \$5.00 fee for duplicate copies.

Pre-registration is required. In order to attend a Food Handler Class you must be pre-registered. Space is limited. Attendees with no pre-registration will not be allowed to attend. To pre-register please call the Environmental Quality Division at 972-237-8055.

Classes are offered the 1st and 3rd Thursday of each month at 9:00 a.m. and 3:30 p.m., at Environmental Quality Division offices, 206 W. Church Street, 2nd Floor, Development Center Building. One class, on the 3rd Thursday of each month, will be offered in Spanish. Please arrive at least 15 minutes early for registration. The classes begin promptly. Persons without the fee, identification, or late arrival will not be admitted. The city accepts cash and checks with proper identification.

For more information visit: <http://www.gptx.org/index.aspx?page=108>

2012 FOOD HANDLER CLASS

SCHEDULE

March 1	9:00 AM	3:30 PM
March 15	9:00 AM	3:30 PM*
April 5	9:00 AM	3:30 PM
April 19	9:00 AM*	3:30 PM
May 3	9:00 AM	3:30 PM
May 17	9:00 AM	3:30 PM*
June 7	9:00 AM	3:30 PM
June 21	9:00 AM*	3:30 PM
July 5	9:00 AM	3:30 PM
July 19	9:00 AM	3:30 PM*
August 2	9:00 AM	3:30 PM
August 16	9:00 AM*	3:30 PM
September 6	9:00 AM	3:30 PM
September 20	9:00 AM	3:30 PM*
October 4	9:00 AM	3:30 PM
October 18	9:00 AM*	3:30 PM
November 1	9:00 AM	3:30 PM
November 15	9:00 AM	3:30 PM*
December 6	9:00 AM	3:30 PM
December 20	9:00 AM*	3:30 PM

*Spanish only.

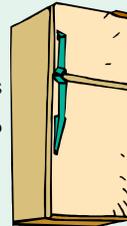
Pre-Registration is required.

Safe Thawing Methods

To keep food **SAFE** during thawing make sure you thaw food in one of the following ways:

IN THE REFRIGERATOR:

Thaw food in a refrigerator that maintains a temperature of 41°F or below. This method requires advance planning because larger foods may take several days to thaw.



UNDER RUNNING WATER:

Thaw food completely submerged under running water at a temperature of 70°F or below. Use sufficient water velocity to agitate and float off loose particles in an overflow for a period of time that does not allow thawed portions of food to rise above 41°F.

When thawing portions of raw animal foods under running water that will require cooking, the temperature may not go above 41°F for more than four hours. This includes the time needed for preparation of cooking the food or the time it takes to lower the food temperature back to 41°F under refrigeration.



IN THE MICROWAVE:

Thaw in a microwave if the food is to be cooked immediately afterward.



COOKING WITHOUT THAWING

When there is not enough time to thaw frozen foods, or you're simply in a hurry, just remember: it is safe to cook foods from the frozen state. The cooking will take approximately 50% longer than the recommended time for fully thawed or fresh meat and poultry.



CITY OF GRAND PRAIRIE
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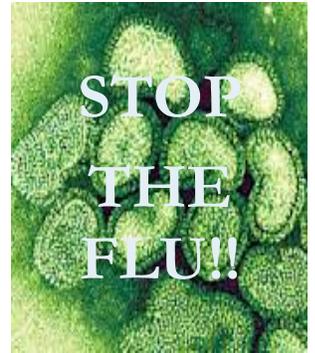
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The Flu and You

The best way to reduce your risk of exposure to the flu virus in your workplace is to use the basic hygiene precautions listed below and to avoid close contact with ill people.

- Follow the proper steps for hand hygiene and cough etiquette, and encourage co-workers, customers, and family members to follow them;
- Stay home if you are ill and encourage ill coworkers to obtain permission to leave work;
- Strictly follow infection control practices at work;
- Use gloves, gowns, masks, and other protective equipment that your employer gives you and follow the steps for putting it on and taking it off correctly, and
- Get a flu shot every year.



Pandemic flu remains a concern for workers and employers. A pandemic can occur at any time and can be mild, moderate, or severe. The pandemic in 2009 was considered by HHS/CDC to be mild but it still created challenges for employers. Employers should have a pandemic flu plan based on a “worst-case” scenario. Planning for the worst-case ensures that employers will have the right type of strategy on hand to protect you. You may have additional planning considerations too. For example, you may need to think about what you’ll do if schools and daycare facilities are closed. For additional information on pandemic flu planning, see How to Protect Yourself in the Workplace during a Pandemic and the planning resources for individuals and families on Flu.gov.



Storm Drain Protection

Storm drains lead directly to streams, rivers, or lakes. Hazardous wastes such as used hydraulic fluids, motor oil, antifreeze, and other materials are dumped on the ground every day and are carried by rain to the nearest storm drain. Most materials or chemical compounds dumped on the ground can be harmful to fish, plants, and other wildlife. In some communities the only source of drinking water is surface water from nearby rivers or lakes. To protect the storm drains follow a few guidelines:

- Never dispose of anything into the storm drains. Only clean rain water should make it to the storm drain.
- Clean up spills immediately to minimize their impact and keep them

from entering storm drains.

- Keep vehicle wash water out of the storm drains even when cleaning agents are said to be biodegradable.
- All outdoor drains are storm drains.
- Don’t wash kitchen mats outside, in the alley, or sidewalks.
- Don’t wash down trash bins or grease storage areas outside.
- Don’t power wash building exteriors using soaps or other cleaning agents.

Remember, it is illegal to allow any pollutants to enter the storm drains.