



We Are Online!!

www.GPTX.ORG

**INSIDE THIS
ISSUE:**

HACCP Plan	2
Hand Hygiene	2
Cleanliness	2
Food Handler Cards	3
Food Handler Class Schedule	3
Cook at The Right Temperature	3
Power Outage	3
Get Fit GP	4
West Nile Virus	4

Food For Thought

SPRING 2014 ISSUE 8

The Food Waste Challenge

Did you know that a staggering 1.3 billion tons of food or 32% of what is grown is wasted every year throughout the world? The US being the most productive and abundant food supply source on earth accounts for a substantial portion of this waste.

The environmental footprint of food waste starts at agricultural production using extensive land and water resources and extends to food processing, transportation, retail, preparation and/ or disposal, depending on where along the way food is discarded. Looking at one component along this chain, the disposal of processed food, the EPA calculates that food is the largest component of municipal solid waste going to landfills, nearly

20% by weight. Landfills are the third largest source of methane accounting for nearly 16% of methane emissions. Methane is a greenhouse gas 21 times more potent than carbon dioxide.



Recognizing these facts, on June 4, 2013 in advance of World Environment Day, the USDA in

collaboration with EPA launched the **US Food Waste Challenge** with commitments to reduce, recover, and recycle food waste from various private sector partners. Lending more credence to this noble task, Pope Francis has turned his attention to reversing the culture of waste, specifically food waste in his traditional Easter message. All industries including the 31 food manufacturing industries in Grand Prairie are encouraged to make this commitment. This should also be a reminder to each one of us to reduce food waste in our homes and other eating places. For more information, please visit the USDA website at www.usda.gov/oce/.

Certified Food Manager

Each food establishment is required to have a City of Grand Prairie Certified Food Manager. The Certified Food Manager class is offered via online training.

Once a certificate is received, the manager/supervisor must come to our office, bring the original certificate and pay \$50.00 to obtain a City of Grand Prairie Food Manager Certificate.

City of Grand Prairie Code of Ordinances require that at least one person in the establishment must be a Certified Food Manager who has completed a food service manager's certification course from a Texas Department of State Health Services accredited institution and be available during inspections. Operators without certified personnel on duty during operations will be cited for this violation.

Training in food protection management is necessary to ensure public health and safety, to comply with state and local ordinances, and to introduce managers and food service employees to current food safety practices.

For a list of accredited course providers visit:

<http://www.dshs.state.tx.us/foodestablishments/handler.shtm>

HACCP Plan



Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Points (HACCP) Plan is a written systematic preventive approach to food safety that addresses all physical, chemical, and biological hazards as a mean of food borne illness prevention rather than as a finished product inspection.

The main purpose of a HACCP Plan is to identify all potential food safety hazards within a process, so that key

elements known as Critical Control Points (CCP's) can be taken to reduce or eliminate the risk of the hazards found in any food process of any type of food and from large industries to small business operations. Examples of CCP's include receiving, food preparation/handling, cold holding, hot holding, thawing, cooking, reheating, transportation, etc.

Based on risk-assessment, HACCP plans allow industry

and government to allocate resources efficiently in establishing and auditing safe food production practices.

For more information on HACCP Plans visit the National Food Service Management Institute (NFSMI) United States Department of Agriculture:

<http://sop.nfsmi.org/HACCPBasedSOPs.php>

Hand Hygiene



Proper handwashing is the most effective method to prevent infection and illness. Keeping hands clean prevents illness at home, at school, and at work. Hand hygiene practices are key prevention tools in healthcare settings, daycare facilities, schools and public institutions, and for food safety.

The basic rule is to wash hands before preparing food and after handling uncooked meat and poultry, before eating, after coughing, sneezing, using the

restroom, or blowing one's nose into a tissue.

When Washing Hands

- Wet your hands with clean running warm water and apply soap.
- Rub hands together to make a lather and scrub all surfaces.
- Continue rubbing hands for 15-20 seconds.
- Rinse hands well under running Water.
- Dry your hands using a paper towel or air dryer. If possible, use

your paper towel to turn off the faucet.

- Always use soap and water if your hands are visibly dirty.

If soap and clean water are not available, use an alcohol-based hand rub to clean your hands. Alcohol based hand rubs significantly reduce the number of germs on the skin and are fast-acting.

For more information visit:
www.cdc.gov/features/handwashing/

Cleanliness



Cleanliness is a major factor in preventing food borne disease outbreaks. Even with food safety inspections by federal, state, and local government officials, facility managers must make sure that all food preparation is handled in a safe manner. Anything and everything that touches food should be cleaned and properly sanitized. To prevent

food borne illnesses follow the following steps:

1. Employees must wash hands before and after handling food items
2. Employees must wear gloves when handling ready to eat products
3. All food contact areas must

be cleaned and sanitized frequently

4. Cutting boards must be washed and sanitized before each use
5. Teach your employees how and when to wash their hands

For more information visit:
www.FoodSafety.gov

Food Handlers Cards

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

The City offers food handler classes. However, certificates from other cities and state approved courses are accepted. Certificates obtained through approved providers must be replaced with a Grand Prairie certificate. The cost to obtain a Grand Prairie food handler card is \$15.00 and proper documentation such as driver's license, birth certificate, Texas ID,

or consular identification must be provided. The cards are valid for 2 years. There is a \$5.00 fee for duplicate copies. Only the original copy of a food handler certificate is accepted.

Pre-registration is required. In order to attend a Food Handler Class you must pre-register. 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 the Environmental Quality Division offices, 206 W. Church Street, 2nd Floor. One class on the 3rd Thursday will be offered in Spanish. Please arrive at least 15 minutes early. The classes begin promptly. Persons without the fee, identification, or late arrival will not be admitted. The city accepts cash, checks, and credit cards with proper identification.

For more information call at
972-237-8055.

2014 FOOD HANDLER CLASS SCHEDULE

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

*Spanish only.

**Pre-Registration is required.
Call 972-237-8055**

Cook at The Right Temperature

Bacteria that cause food poisoning multiply quickest in the "Danger Zone" between 40° and 140° Fahrenheit. And while many people think they can tell when food is "done" simply by checking its color and texture, there's no way to be sure it's safe without following a few important but simple steps:

- Cooked food is safe only after it's been heated to a high enough temperature to kill harmful bacteria. Color and texture alone won't tell you whether your food is done. Instead, use a food thermometer to be sure.
- When you think your food is done, place the food thermome-

ter in the thickest part of the food. Wait the amount of time recommended for your type of thermometer.

- Some foods need 3 minutes of rest time after cooking to make sure that harmful germs are killed.
- Clean your food thermometer with hot, soapy water after each use.
- Keep food hot after cooking (at 140 °F or above).
- The possibility of bacterial growth actually increases as food cools after cooking

because the drop in temperature allows bacteria to thrive. But you can keep your food above the safe temperature of 140°F by using a heat source like a chafing dish, warming tray, or slow cooker.

- Microwave food thoroughly. To make sure harmful bacteria have been killed in your foods, it's important to microwave them to 165° or higher.

For more information visit:
<http://www.FoodSafety.gov>

Power Outage

During power outages all employees should know what to do to prevent food spoilage and/or food borne illnesses. If the electric power goes off, do the following:

- Close the facility. It's not safe to operate without lights, refrigeration, ventilation, or hot water.
- Write down the time when the power outage occurred. Your food safety "time clock" starts when the power goes out.
- Begin taking regular food temper-

ature readings.

- Have a food thermometer ready at all times.
- Check hot foods every hour and cold foods every two hours.
- Keep a time/temperature log for every item checked.
- You must throw out food that has gotten warmer than 41°F or cooler than 140°F for more than 4 hours. If the

power outage is brief (under one hour) re-heat food to 165° F.

- Do not serve food, do not give it to staff, family members, or shelters if the food has been in the Danger Zone.

For more information on power outage call the Environmental Quality Division at
(972)237-8055.



**Environmental Quality
Division**

**206 W. Church St. 2nd Floor
Grand Prairie, TX 75050
Phone: 972-237-8055
Fax: 972-237-8228**



This newsletter is a publication of:
Environmental Services Department
Environmental Quality Division
Submit Your Comments to:
Editor: Werner Rodriguez
Phone: 972-237-8056
Fax: 972-237-8228
Email: wrodriguez@gptx.org

City of Grand Prairie Launches Get Fit Program

On January 2014, the City of Grand Prairie launched a new wellness initiative called Get Fit Grand Prairie. This program features a website with tools, tips and local resources for residents to get up, get out, and get fit. The program also highlights monthly health related topics and encourages residents to participate in activities hosted by the City and its partners. Go to gptx.org/getfitgp to learn more and take the pledge to live a healthier lifestyle and to automatically get entered into a monthly drawing to win a prize. Please share this website with your employees so they can benefit from this great program! For more information visit: www.gptx.org/GetFitGP.

Get Fit GP invites you to participate in the first Get Fit GP 5K & 1 mile "Chase the Chiefs" Fun Run on Saturday, March 29, 2014. For registration go to www.grandfungp.com



West Nile Virus

West Nile is a disease passed from an infected mosquito to another animal or to humans. When a mosquito with the West Nile virus bites a healthy person, it normally causes a flu-like symptom, but a serious reaction in children, the elderly, or the immunocompromised may develop. In these populations there is a potential risk for brain swelling and even death.

Mosquitoes carrying West Nile Virus in Texas are active all year round with an increase in their activity from May to October. Peak time for contact with mosquitoes is usually in August and September. They tend to be most active and to bite more during dusk and dawn. High temperatures, high humidity, and stagnant water in the yard help to increase the mosquito population. Exposure to West Nile Virus also increases.

The best way to prevent West Nile disease or any other mosquito-borne illness is to take personal precautions to avoid mosquito bites.

For more information visit us at:

www.gptx.org/FightTheBite

gptx.org/FightTheBite

1. Stay indoors dawn and dusk
2. Use insect spray with DEET
3. Dress to cover arms and legs
4. Drain standing water



FIGHT THE BITE