

FOOD FOR THOUGHT

Spring 2018

Issue 16



Clean Hands Save Lives

Keeping hands clean through improved hand hygiene is one of the most important steps we can take to prevent foodborne illness outbreaks and the spread of bacteria and viruses to others.

When should you wash your hands?

- Before, during, and after preparing food
- Before eating food
- Before and after treating a cut or wound
- After using the toilet
- After changing diapers or cleaning up a child who has used the toilet
- After blowing your nose, coughing, or sneezing
- After touching garbage

How should you wash your hands?

- Wet your hands with clean, running water (warm or cold), turn off the tap, and apply soap
- Lather your hands by rubbing them together with the soap. Be sure to lather the backs of your hands, between your fingers, and under your nails
- Scrub your hands for at least 20 seconds. Need a timer? Hum the “Happy Birthday” song from beginning to end twice
- Rinse your hands well under clean, running water
- Dry your hands using a clean towel or air dry them

Washing your hands with soap and clean water is the best method to wash your hands, but if this is not available, use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer that contains at least 60% alcohol. Alcohol-based hand sanitizers can quickly reduce the number of germs on hands in some situations, but sanitizers do not eliminate all types of germs and might not remove harmful chemicals.



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Churn out Sanitary Ice at Restaurants

Ice may not be caloric or a line item on your restaurant menu, but it is consumed by your restaurant guests and comes with a variety of food safety challenges. To help you reduce contamination threats specific to this beverage element, ServSafe provides these best practices:

- 1 Remove ice with a designated scoop
- 2 Store the scoop outside the ice supply
- 3 Designate specific equipment for hauling ice
- 4 If glass breaks anywhere near an exposed ice supply, dispose of the ice
- 5 Separate ice for drinks from ice used keep food cold
- 6 Clean and sanitize your ice machines regularly

Norovirus: You Don't Want It

Norovirus is a germ that spreads quickly and easily. It causes vomiting and diarrhea that come on suddenly. Millions of people get ill with norovirus each year. You can help protect yourself and others by washing your hands often and following simple tips to stay healthy.

Norovirus Is the Most Common Cause of Gastroenteritis in the U.S

CDC estimates that each year in the United States norovirus causes 19 to 21 million illnesses, 56,000 to 71,000 hospitalizations, and 570 to 800 deaths. Anyone can get infected with norovirus, and you can get it more than once. It is estimated that a person will get norovirus about 5 times during their lifetime. Norovirus outbreaks occur throughout the year, but over 80% of reported outbreaks occur from November to April.

Norovirus spreads quickly. It is found in the vomit and poop of infected people. You can get it by:

- Having direct physical contact with a person who is infected with norovirus, for example, caring for or shaking hands with an ill person and then touching your hands to your mouth
- Eating food or drinking liquids that are contaminated with norovirus
- Touching surfaces or objects with norovirus on them and then putting your hands in your mouth

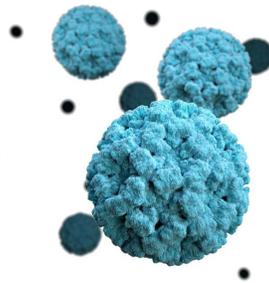
Protect Yourself and Others from Norovirus

- Practice proper hand hygiene
- Clean and disinfect contaminated surfaces
- Wash laundry thoroughly

Common Norovirus Outbreak Settings

While norovirus spreads quickly from person to person in enclosed places like nursing homes and cruise ships, it is also a major cause of outbreaks in restaurants and catered-meal settings if contaminated food is served or people handling food are ill.

For more information, please visit www.cdc.gov/features/norovirus.



Grease Trap Maintenance

All food service establishments in the City of Grand Prairie must pump their grease trap according to their established frequency. The pumping frequency of the grease trap is shown on the health permit issued to each facility.

When contracting services, ensure that the liquid waste hauler is permitted by the city. After the grease trap is pumped, a copy of the trip ticket should be obtained by the owner/manager of the facility. All establishments must keep a copy of each pumping event for at least 2 years and must be available for inspection at all times.

For more information, please call 972-237-8055.



Take the Get Fit GP pledge for a healthy lifestyle and sign up for a chance to win prizes: www.gptx.org/getfitgp



Food Handler Class



A food handler card or certificate issued by accredited providers is required to work in the food industry in Texas and the City of Grand Prairie. Employers must ensure that all their employees have a food handler card or certificate within 60 days of hiring. The cards or certificates must be available for inspection at all times. Allowing employees to work without a food handler card or certificate is a violation of state laws and the City Code of Ordinances.

Food handler cards or certificates obtained through accredited providers are not required to be transferred to a city of Grand Prairie food handler card.

The Environmental Quality Division offers food handler classes the 1st and 3rd Thursday of each month for employees who work in the food industry. Classes are offered in English or Spanish. To attend a class you must bring an identification and pay a fee of \$15.00. Call 972-237-8055 to register or obtain additional information. For more information, please visit www.gptx.org/environmentalservices.

New Food Establishment Fees



On September 19, 2017, the City of Grand Prairie Council approved amendments to Chapter XIII, Article II "Food Establishments". The approved amendments include the change of annual fees for all food service permits. All food establishments that hold or apply for a Food Service permit will have an annual fee of \$500. The new fees went into effect immediately. For existing facilities the new fee will be reflected on the annual invoices sent to each facility. Contact us with questions at 972-237-8055.

2018 Food Handler Schedule

January 4	9:00 AM	3:30 PM
January 18	9:00 AM	3:30 PM*
February 1	9:00 AM	3:30 PM*
February 15	9:00 AM*	3:30 PM
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. Register by calling 972-237-8055

Fight the Bite

Warmer weather is just around the corner and along with it comes mosquito season. By eliminating sites with stagnant water the potential for mosquito breeding and transmission of diseases like West Nile and Zika is reduced.

What you can do to help:

- Clean rain gutters free of debris and leaves
- While outside, use an EPA-approved insect repellent
- Repair leaky pipes, outdoor faucets, and ensure proper operation of sprinklers
- Cover or turn upside down any container that may collect water

- Fill in or drain any low places (puddles, ruts) around your facility
- Cover trash containers to keep out rain water
- Fill in any tree holes and hollow stumps that hold water with sand or concrete
- Keep grass cut short and shrubbery well-trimmed around your property

Remember, NO standing water, NO mosquitoes. Keep mosquitoes under control.

For additional information, please contact us at 972-237-8056 or visit us on-line at www.gptx.org/fightthebite.

2 MINUTES SPENT
IDLING IS EQUAL
TO 1 MILE OF
DRIVING



TURN OFF YOUR ENGINE AND
HELP CLEAR THE AIR IN
GRAND PRAIRIE

This newsletter is a publication of:
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Keep Food and Water Safe After a Disaster or Emergency

After a disaster throw away food that may have come in contact with flood or storm water; perishable foods that have not been refrigerated properly due to power outages; and those with an unusual odor, color, or texture. Unsafe food can make you sick even if it looks, smells, and tastes normal. **When in doubt, throw it out.**

Clean and sanitize things that touch food in a four-step process:

- 1 Wash with soap and clean water
- 2 Rinse with clean water
- 3 Sanitize by immersing for 1 minute in a solution of 1 cup (8 ounces or 240 milliliters) of chlorine bleach in 5 gallons of clean water
- 4 Allow to air dry

Do not use water you suspect or have been told is contaminated to wash dishes, wash and prepare food, wash your hands or make ice.

For more information, please visit www.cdc.gov/disasters/foodwater.

Proper Cleaning

Restaurants must maintain a clean and hygienic environment for the health and safety of employees and patrons. Every aspect of the facility must be properly cleaned to ensure safe food preparation and handling. Restaurant managers must carefully inspect kitchen areas, eating and dining areas and restrooms to make sure the restaurant meets health and sanitation requirements set forth by the local government.

Kitchen Area

The kitchen is one of the most important areas in the restaurant to keep clean. This area is exposed to a variety of possible contaminants. Cooks, servers, bussers, and even cashiers have access to the kitchen and could potentially contaminate food products. Uncooked food also poses health

risks if surfaces are not cleaned sufficiently. To properly clean a restaurant kitchen, employees must sanitize equipment and surfaces that have come in contact with food and kitchen instruments and must do so after each task. Kitchen items such as cutting boards, blenders, grills and countertops should also be disinfected.

