



# Food For Thought



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## *The Big Four*

No matter how you slice it you and your employees need to know about the "Big Four" contagious illness or diseases. The "Big Four" are four particularly dangerous organisms that are highly infectious. It may take only a few organisms to infect a person and is highly virulent (a person can become severely ill once infected). The Food Code has identified these organisms as the "Big Four":

- \* Salmonella Typhi (Typhoid fever) - Common symptoms are diarrhea, abdominal cramps, vomiting and fever.
- \* Shigella spp (Shigellosis) - Common symptoms are bloody diarrhea, abdominal pain and cramps and fever (occasionally)
- \* E coli O157:H7 (Escherichia coli) - Common symptoms are diarrhea (eventually becomes bloody), abdominal cramps, may result in hemolytic uremic syndrome (HUS)
- \* Hepatitis A virus (Hep A) - Common symptoms are mild fever, general weakness, nausea, abdominal pain, and later, jaundice (yellowing of the eyes and skin).

All employees need to know about the four so they can notify the Person in Charge (PIC) if they become ill. Employees must immediately notify their supervisor if they have any of the following symptoms:

- Fever
- Persistent sneezing or coughing
- Diarrhea or vomiting
- Jaundice
- Sore throat with fever

They are **REQUIRED** by the Food Code to do so.

The PIC (Manager or designated employee) needs to be knowledgeable about these contagious diseases in order to **EXCLUDE** the employee from working in the facility until cleared by their doctor to return to work.

The PIC needs to Notify the Health Department whenever one of their employees are diagnosed with one of the Big Four.

Keeping ill employees at home until they are cleared to work by their physician is the best way to keep your facility from being implicated in a foodborne illness outbreak.

## **Emergency Action Plans for Retail Food Establishments**

In the past few years there have been many emergency situations in the State of Michigan. In the Detroit area there was a loss of power for several days which led to water loss and sewage disposal problems. What would your food establishment do in case of an emergency? The enclosed yellow booklet will give you some common sense approaches to emergencies in your facility. The booklet is hole punched so you can hang it on you bulletin board, that way you will not be searching through all your filing cabinets when the situation arises. This booklet is also available online @ [www.michigan.gov/mda](http://www.michigan.gov/mda). Read through the booklet and post it, so you and your employees know who to contact and what to do in case of an emergency.

## ***PUBLIC HEALTH ACCREDITATION***

Every three years the Michigan Department of Agriculture inspects the Bay County Health Department's food service program for quality and consistency. While overall the program reflects the quality and consistency that is expected, there are some areas that need improvement, therefore, your next inspection will be a little different.

In the past, many things were discussed during the inspection. Now we will be meeting with the Person In Charge (PIC) at the beginning of the inspection to review menu items, discuss sick policy, cooling foods, the "Big Four", foodborne illness, hand washing, and much more. This new process will take some time, so be patient!

When the Food Code was updated in 2000, it required that a PIC must be present during all hours of operations. This person is responsible for monitoring and managing all food establishment operations and is authorized to take action to ensure that the Food Code is being followed properly.

The PIC must demonstrate competency. This is done by answering questions correctly and observation of the food operation itself. The PIC must apply the required food safety information to the operation.

The PIC must demonstrate the following:

- (1) Monitor hand washing - see page 3
- (2) Ensure that all employees are properly trained in food safety
- (3) Ability to state required food temperatures
- (4) Ability to state the proper method to cool food with 2-step process
- (5) Be knowledgeable of the "Big Four" - Salmonella, E-coli, Shigella and Hepatitis A - see page 1
- (6) Communication between PIC and employee regarding changes in health status - page 1
- (7) Responsibility of food employee to report illness to PIC
- (8) Describe symptoms associated with diseases that are transmitted by food
- (9) Be knowledgeable of when to exclude and restrict food employees - see page 1
- (10) Notify the Health Department when a food employee has one of the "Big Four"

There are many food safety issues that a PIC must be able to demonstrate. On your next inspection be ready to answer all the questions. Have a designated PIC, if you do not, it is a critical item violation.

### ***INTERESTED IN FOOD SAFETY TRAINING?***

### ***SERVSAFE IS YOUR ANSWER!***

Let us know when your establishment is interested in attending our next ServSafe class. This is an educational course in food safety which is accredited by the American National Standards Institute and the Conference for Food Protection. The Environmental Health Division of the Bay County Health Department is offering this valuable class to food service establishments in the Bay County area. A certificate will be given upon completion of the class with a passing grade. Not-for-profit organizations are \$120.00 per person. All other organizations are \$150.00 per person. The ServSafe course provides training in basic sanitation principles including: Food Microbiology, Prevention of Foodborne Illness, Safe Food Handling, Personal Hygiene, Construction and Maintenance of Food Service Facilities, Pest Control, and Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Point Principles (HACCP).

If you have questions about our next food safety class, please feel free to contact us at (989) 895-4006. A brochure can be mailed to your establishment. Send you and your employees today!

#### **WHO SHOULD ATTEND**

- Owners, Operators, and Food Service Personnel, as well as Food Service Employees including:
  - Caterers and Vendors
  - Salesmen in Food service
  - Dieticians and Dietary Personnel
  - Temporary Food Vendors
  - Special Transitory Food Unit Vendors (STFU)
  - Hospital, School, Daycare and Foster Home Care workers
  - New and Prospective Food Service Owners
  - Others interested in Food Safety & Sanitation

## *Q & A – School Food Service Programs*

### **Q. How many inspections does a school's food service program need per year?**

- A. According to United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) guidelines, schools should have two per year. However, the Michigan Department of Agriculture has ruled that schools may request a written waiver based upon the limited resources of the local county health department to provide an extra inspection. To obtain your written waiver, your school must be in operation only nine months or less during the calendar year. If your school is in operation more than nine months, or has a summer program that utilizes its food service program, your facility must have two inspections.

To request your written waiver, submit a letter to:

Joel Strasz  
Public Health Services Manager  
Bay County Health Department  
1200 Washington Ave.  
Bay City, MI 48708

### **Q. What about Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Point (HACCP) plans? Does the Health Department need to review them?**

- A. Additionally, the law states that schools implement a HACCP food safety program as established by the Secretary of Agriculture. The Bay County Health Department does not have to review or approve the school's HACCP plans, but can answer questions and give advice to the school about them.



## **HANDWASHING 101**

Handwashing is a vital tool in preventing the spread of bacteria and viruses that can cause infections and food-borne illness. Proper handwashing by food employees is necessary to control direct and indirect contamination of food, utensils, and equipment.

### **When to Wash Hands**

- ⇒ Before starting to work with food, utensils, or equipment
- ⇒ When switching between raw foods and ready-to-eat foods
- ⇒ After handling utensils and equipment that contact raw food or are soiled
- ⇒ After coughing, sneezing, using a tissue, or using tobacco products
- ⇒ After eating or drinking
- ⇒ After touching bare human body parts other than clean hands
- ⇒ After handling animals
- ⇒ After using the toilet room
- ⇒ At all other times as necessary during food preparation

### **Proper Way to Wash Hands**

- ⇒ Before washing hands, remove any jewelry
- ⇒ Wash hands only in the sink designated for hand washing
- ⇒ Do not wash hands in a service sink or one used for washing utensils

### **Follow These Five Steps**

- ⇒ Wet hands and exposed portion of forearms with warm water
- ⇒ Using soap, work up a lather that covers hands and forearms
- ⇒ Vigorously rub hands together for at least **20 seconds**. Pay particular attention to the areas under the fingernails and between the fingers
- ⇒ Rinse hands and forearms in clean water
- ⇒ Dry hands and forearms

## **Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs)**

Section 8-201.12(E) of the Food Code requires that "Standard Operating Procedures (SOP) that ensure compliance with the requirements of this Code are developed or are being developed during the plan review process." The Michigan Department of Agriculture (MDA) will be requiring a SOP for all **NEW** (excluding vending) and **REMODELED** facilities that have a change in menu or operation starting October 1, 2004. Many of the new facilities have completed a SOP and find they are helpful during training of new and existing employees working with food safety management.

The main purpose of the SOP is to promote active food safety management and not create a document for regulatory review. Regulatory review will be limited to determining if the SOP is technically correct and complete enough to be effective. The overall goal is to assist and support food managers in creating a document that will help them manage food safety more effectively.

SOP development should be kept as simple as possible to avoid creating a roadblock in the Plan Review process. Requiring SOPs help reduce foodborne illness risk factors. These risk factors, identified by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) include: hand-washing, personal hygiene, employee illness, approved sources, cleaning and sanitizing. Other food safety SOPs that may be required, depending on the facility, include: date marking, ware-washing, cross-contamination and time and temperature control. According to the Michigan Department of Agriculture (MDA), SOPs are an important tool in meeting the Department's goal of reducing foodborne illness risk factors in food establishments by 25% by the year 2010.

A check list is available with the Plan Review Application \ Worksheet if you are planning on building or remodeling your establishment, which will help guide you through the SOP writing process.

**Visit our web site:**

**[www.baycounty-mi.gov](http://www.baycounty-mi.gov)**

**Regularly scheduled  
office hours for  
Environmental Health**

**Division:**

**Monday - Friday**

**8:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m.**

**(Closed For Lunch**

**12:00—1:00 p.m.)**

**1:00 p.m. to 5:00 p.m.**

**Closed on major Holidays**

## ***DON'T BE LATE!***

Food service license fees are due by April 30, 2007.

All license fees should be postmarked by Monday, April 30, in order to avoid paying late fees. You can also personally deliver the application and fees to the Environmental Health Division to avoid late charges.

Food service license fees paid between May 1 but before May 31 will incur a 50% late fee. Food service license fees paid after May 31 will incur a 100% late fee.

**Don't delay, get your licenses in!!**

## **Environmental Health Division Information**

### **Mission**

We, at the Bay County Health Department, commit to providing Bay County residents with quality health care delivered by our qualified, compassionate staff. We believe in holistic approach in promoting the optimal level of wellness in each individual.

### **Goals**

The goals of the Public Health Administration are to establish and maintain a community focus on Public Health through the development of an efficiently organized, adequately staffed and effective Health Department.

The Bay County Health Department was created to meet the needs and the expectations of all citizens in Bay County. Many of the services are free of charge while others are based on income, eligibility criteria, and fee for service.

### **COOLING FOOD PROPERLY WITH THE 2-STEP PROCESS**

1. From 140° F to 70° F cool within 2 hours
2. From 70° F to 41° F cool within 4 hours

All foods cool at different rates. It depends on how much moisture and how thick the food is.

#### **There are different methods to use:**

1. Small, shallow containers. The more surface area the faster food will cool. We do not recommend more than 3" of food in the container. Cover food loosely with wrap or slide lid off. Place food in walk-in where there is plenty of airflow.
2. Add ice as an ingredient.
3. Place container of food in an ice bath and stir frequently.
4. Any other effective means.

Temperatures must be monitored with a calibrated food thermometer. If the food is not cooling fast enough, break food into small containers, add ice etc. Just don't walk away and hope it cools. If your shift is over, let the next person know where you are in the cooling process.

### **KNOW YOUR FOOD TEMPERATURES**

Cold Food Holding	41° F or below
Hot Food Holding	140° F or higher

#### **Minimum Cooking Temperatures:**

Poultry and Stuffed Fish, meat, pork, pasta or poultry:  
165° F for 15 seconds

Raw shell eggs, any ground meat and fish and raw shell eggs not for immediate service:  
155° F for 15 seconds

Whole Roasts of beef, corned beef, pork or cured pork  
See Chart in Code

Reheating food for Hot Holding  
165° F for 15 seconds within 2 hours

Reheating Ready-to-Eat food that is commercially processed  
140° F