

IN THIS ISSUE:

...Page 2

Soft Serve
Ice Cream

...Page 3

Returning
to Work
After Illness

...Page 4

Food
Tidbitsannual newsletter
Food Safety

January 2024

4 STEPS TO FOOD SAFETY

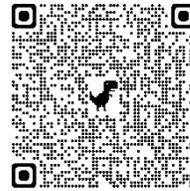
**Certified Food Protection Manager (CFPM)**

Requirement Now Being Enforced

As a reminder the Certified Food Protection Manager requirement went into effect on March 1, 2023 and staff will now be marking violations for those that are required to have a certificate and have not yet obtained the certification. Only 1 CFPM is required for an establishment and that person is responsible for training all the Persons-In-Charge(PIC) of an establishment.

Things to Know about the CFPM Requirement:

- Some low-risk establishments are exempt (espresso, packaged grocery only, seasonal permits and some other low-risk establishments)
- A CFPM may support more than 1 establishment such as if you have multiple locations.
- If your CFPM leaves employment, you have 60 days to hire a new CFPM or have another employee obtain the certificate.
- CFPM certificates are valid for 5 years.
- The CFPM does not need to be onsite, but a copy of the certificate must be available during inspections.
- The CFPM is responsible for ensuring that all PICs meet the knowledge requirements in WAC [246-215-02105](#) and that they ensure the duties of the PIC are being done to maintain Active Managerial Control under [WAC 246-215-02115](#).

QR Code for Official ANSI
List of CFPM Testers

List of Current ANSI Accredited CFPM as of 1/1/24

1. [1 AAA FOOD SAFETY \(AAA FOOD SAFETY, LLC\)](#)
2. [APS CULINARY DYNAMICS \(DBA: WORLD FOOD SAFETY ORGANIZATION\)](#)
3. [CERTUS/STATEFOODSAFETY.COM](#)
4. [LEARN2SERVE](#)
5. [MY FOOD SERVICE LICENSE](#)
6. [NATIONAL REGISTRY OF FOOD SAFETY PROFESSIONALS](#)
7. [NATIONAL RESTAURANT ASSOCIATION SOLUTIONS \(SERV SAFE\)](#)
8. [RELISH WORKS \(DBA: TRUST 20\)](#)
9. [RESPONSIBLE TRAINING/SAFEWAY CERTIFICATIONS](#)
10. [THE ALWAYS FOOD SAFE COMPANY](#)

Updated Building Operating Hours

The Department has new hours when open to the public. We are now open Monday Through Thursday from 7:30AM to 5:00PM.



Soft Serve Ice Cream Machines & Listeria

This last summer an outbreak of Listeria originating from a restaurant in Tacoma caused the death of 3 individuals and hospitalization of others. The outbreak was traced back to a soft serve ice cream machine that was not being properly maintained. This is not the first outbreak of Listeria associated with soft serve ice cream machines. Staff are spending a little extra time asking questions about ice cream machines during routine inspections, so we wanted to provide some reminders.

must stop using the machine until you are able to clean it according to manufacturer instructions.



Typical Soft Serve Machine

Ice Cream Machine Reminders

- Ice Cream mix – Must be date marked and discarded after 7 days (except if the machine pasteurizes the ice cream daily)
- Frequency of cleaning should be based on the manufacturer recommendations but at least every 7 days (except if the machine pasteurizes the ice cream daily and approved by NSF for longer times between cleaning)
- Check Liquid Mix Temperature in Hopper – Verify it is 41F or less.
- Clean Machine according to manufacturer's cleaning procedures in the owner's manual.
 - Have copy onsite.
 - Train staff responsible for cleaning the machines based on the instruction manual.
 - Many of the machines require special brushes to clean tubing and other parts of the equipment. Verify you have all the required tools.
- If you don't have the cleaning instructions or the tools specified in the manual to clean the machine you

Listeria basic information:

- Serious infections typically affect pregnant women, newborns, elderly and people who are immunocompromised.
- For pregnant women it can cause miscarriages and premature births.
- Symptoms can appear 3 days to 70 days after eating the contaminated food.
- Grows at refrigeration temperatures and the primary reason for the date marking requirement and 7-day shelf life for certain foods including soft serve mixes.
- Listeria will form biofilms inside units that make it more difficult to clean and generally that's why specially designed brushes are usually required with soft serve machines.

Signs offered by Health & Human Services



As a reminder Health & Human Services offers a variety of laminated food safety signs and no smoking signs. Feel free to contact us, stop by the office or ask your inspector about available signs.

Signs Currently available:

No Smoking	No Pets Allowed
Raw Meat Storage	Pets At Outdoor Seating Allowed
Allergen Awareness	Food Worker Card
Proper Cooling	Illness Notification Reminder
No Bare Hand Contact	Cross Contamination
Handwashing	Other Food Safety Signs

Food Safety



Illness Policy Requirement When Returning to Work

We wanted to remind establishments that you have a duty to verify employees are symptom free for at least 24 hours if they have had symptoms of vomiting and/or diarrhea prior to returning to work per WAC 246-215-02250. If an employee is out sick and the establishment does not know the reason, then upon return the Person In Charge must verify that if they had those symptoms that they haven't had them in at least 24 hours.

Staff with norovirus are most contagious when they have symptoms and during the first few days after feeling better. So, the longer staff can stay out if they have vomiting and diarrhea symptoms the lower the chance that they will cause an outbreak from your establishment.

Best Practice is to use an illness log to track employees with these symptoms to identify a potential trend of illnesses in the facility so proactive steps can be taken to stop the spread of illness. A template illness log created by DOH is available on our website or from staff.

FAQs

Does HIPAA prevent food establishment employers from asking employees about vomiting and diarrhea?

- **No, HIPAA applies to health care facilities/providers, insurance companies and similar covered entities. I.e. a doctor's office can not share health information with a food establishment, but a PIC/manager can ask the employee about symptoms. The employee is also obligated in the food regulations to disclose those symptoms to the PIC as a condition of working in a food establishment. This does not mean employers should go around sharing employee illness information with other people that don't need to know.**

If staff are uncomfortable talking about vomiting and diarrhea, do I still have to ask them?

Yes, but you can use less invasive methods such as asking them a basic verification question such as "Have you been symptom free of vomiting and diarrhea for at least 24 hours"

What if an employee has a medical condition that causes vomiting, diarrhea, or jaundice that is not caused by an infectious disease?

- **The employee is required to provide the employer with medical documentation from a physician that the symptoms are due to a medical condition that does not cause foodborne illness in order to work.**

Norovirus is the leading cause of foodborne illness in the US and the main prevention methods for this pathogen and several others are:

- Not working while ill from diarrhea or vomiting and staying out of the establishment after symptoms have ended (minimum 24 hours)
- Washing hands properly including a double handwash after using restroom
- Not using bare hand contact on ready to eat foods

While none of these three employee hygiene practices are able to prevent 100% of disease transmission alone, as a team of good practices they significantly reduce the risk of an outbreak from fecal-oral pathogens such as norovirus.





Inspection Area Reassignments

As you may have noticed during routine inspections, we have rotated our inspection areas for staff. Our Department does this about every 3 or 4 years. The updated inspection areas with staff list are to the right of this article.

Sometimes we get asked why we rotate areas so the basic reasons are:

- To prevent staff complacency. As staff see the same facility many times and the same operator, we worry they will get used to seeing the same things and not ask as many questions or be as observant.
- A new set of eyes in a facility tends to notice different things that may be a food safety issue.
- To give our staff exposure to all different kinds of operations and menus to better develop their skills.

New Inspection Area Assignments

Castle Rock – Jesse

Cougar, Silver Lake, Toutle & Ryderwood - Cora

Longview – Ruby & Emma

Lexington - Emma

Kalama – Ruby

Kelso – Cora & Jesse

Woodland – Cora

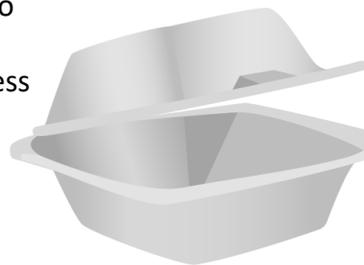
Online Inspection Reports

As a reminder, we are in the process of making inspection reports available online again. About half of the files have been scanned so far and we hope to have the rest scanned towards the end of the first quarter of 2024.

Once live if you notice any issues, please feel free to reach out to our office to address. Eventually we intend to put QR codes on the permits for easier access to the system at food establishments.

EPS Ban Effective in 2024

Effective June 2024 there will be a ban on the use of expanded polystyrene foam containers in Washington state. These foam containers often mistakenly referred to as Styrofoam will be prohibited except when used for packaging **raw** products such as meat, poultry, seafood, eggs or produce. Similar to the plastic bag ban the enforcement and educational information is provide by the [Washington State Department of Ecology](https://www.ecy.wa.gov/).



DEPARTMENT CONTACT INFO

**Health & Human Services
Main Building**
1952 9th Avenue
Longview, WA 98632

Monday-Thursday
7:30am - 5:00pm

Phone: (360) 414-5599
Email: AskCowlitzHealth@cowlitzwa.gov
Fax: (360) 425-7531



PROGRAM CONTACT INFO

Food Program Inspectors
Jesse Smith smithj@cowlitzwa.gov x6442
Cora Siipola siipolac@cowlitzwa.gov x6440
Ruby Stilson stilsonr@cowlitzwa.gov x6443
Emma Diffendal diffendale@cowlitzwa.gov x6432

Food Program Admin
Debby Johnson johnsond@cowlitzwa.gov x6441