

Quarterly Scoop

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DSHS Northwest Texas

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Trending Violations:

1. Handwashing facilities supplied & accessible
2. Permit to operate
3. Food contact surfaces cleaned & sanitized
4. Thermometers provided & accurate

Letter from the Editor

By Kassi Anthony

Hello Everyone!

Our team has been hard at work to continue to raise health and safety standards within our region. Recently, we attended a public health fair in Claude to promote food safety through community engagement. The event was successful, and we received positive feedback from those who attended.

Our inspection team has completed the first semester of school inspections! During these inspections, we ensure schools maintain high food safety and hygiene standards. This supports the well-being of students and staff. We are very proud of the hard work put into these efforts.

Food safety is paramount in our work as sanitarians. Operator cooperation and vigilance in matters of food safety are vital contributions to our shared vision of a healthy Texas. Our teamwork helps reduce the risk of foodborne diseases and improve the quality of life in our community.

As always, we would love to hear any feedback from you on this newsletter. Send us your topic ideas for upcoming issues by [email](#). Take care and cook safe!

Dogs are allowed inside a restaurant if they are a service animal.

Service Animals

By Brittany Bowling

The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) defines a service animal as “dogs that are individually trained to do work or perform tasks for people with disabilities.”

Per the official health and safety code, a food service or retail establishment cannot deny a service animal entry into an area that is not used to prepare food if:

- A person with a disability accompanies and controls the service animal
- An approved trainer accompanies and controls the service animal

If you are unsure if the dog is a service animal, you may ask these questions:

- Is the dog a service animal required because of a disability?
- What work or task has the dog been trained to perform?

You cannot:

- Ask about the person’s disability
- Demand medical documentation
- Demand special identification or documentation for the dog
- Ask that the dog show its ability to perform the work or task

The service animal must be under control. The ADA states, “Service animals must be harnessed, leashed, or tethered, unless the individual’s disability prevents using these devices or these devices interfere with the service animal’s safe, effective performance of tasks. In that case, the individual must maintain control of the animal through voice, signal, or other effective controls.”

To find out more information of service animals you can visit the ADA website:

[ada.gov/resources/service-animals-2010-requirements](https://www.ada.gov/resources/service-animals-2010-requirements)

Or you can read the Texas Disability Law- Service Animals:

[gov.texas.gov/organization/disabilities/assistance_animals](https://www.gov.texas.gov/organization/disabilities/assistance_animals)



Let's Talk Dented Cans

By Melissa Hardin

If a can containing food has a small, flat dent, but is otherwise in good shape, the food should be safe to eat. Discard deeply dented cans. A deep dent is one that you can lay your finger into. Deep dents often have sharp points. A sharp dent on either the top/bottom or side seam can damage the seam and allow bacteria to enter the can. Discard any can with a deep dent, or where the seam is damaged.

Remember: Cans that are leaking, bulging, or have holes are a no-go.



Sanitizers

By Leslie Morgan

Chlorine, quaternary ammonia (“quat”), and iodine are sanitizers approved for use in food service. Chlorine and “quat” are the most common. Use these in your three-compartment sink, spray bottles, and sanitizer buckets. Correct test strips must go with the sanitizer used.

For quaternary ammonia test strips, look for:

- qt10 or qt40
- Yellow to dark green/blue color code

To test “quat,” put the strip in the solution and let it sit for 10 seconds. “Quat” should be 200-400 ppm concentration, or according to manufacturer’s instructions.

For chlorine, the strips have a purple color code on the bottle. To test, put the strip in the solution for an instant reading. Chlorine should be 50-100ppm concentration.

If you dip the strip in and it turns black, then changes to white, it means that the concentration is too high. You will need to dilute and test again.

Keep in mind that water temperature and pH can affect the sanitizer, so **always follow manufacturer guidelines.**

Bare Hand Contact

By Lindsey Eudey

Food preparation personnel may not touch ready-to-eat food with their bare hands. Bare hand contact with ready-to-eat food items can contribute to foodborne illness.

How do we help prevent that from happening?

By using barriers, such as gloves, tongs, or deli tissue.

A food business can lessen the risk of making someone sick by wearing gloves, washing hands, and excluding ill food workers.

Before putting on gloves, it is important to wash hands to make sure the gloves stay clean. It is also important to remember to change gloves out when they soiled. For example, after cracking raw eggs, you must remove your gloves, wash your hands, and then put on new gloves before handling other foods.

Gloves are not required when handling food items that will cook at a high temperature. For example, people preparing pizzas for cooking do not have to wear gloves because the pizza is cooked in a 500°F oven, which kills bacteria. When removing the pizza from the oven, however, the employee must wear gloves. This avoids reintroducing bacteria onto the pizza before it's consumed. A business must also have the approval of the regulatory authority to prepare ready-to-eat food with bare hands.

Use this quick guide to prevent contamination from hands:

dshs.texas.gov/sites/default/files/foodestablishments/pdf/PreventingContaminationFromHands.pdf

Links & Contacts

[Region 1 - Retail Foods Contact Info](#)

[Texas Interactive Jurisdictional Map](#)

[Retail Food Establishments | Texas DSHS](#)

[Starting a New Retail Food Establishment in Texas](#)

[CFM Examination Providers | Texas DSHS](#)

[Accredited Food Handler Internet \(Online\) Training Programs](#)

[Cottage Food Production Operations](#)

