

Quarterly Scoop

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PHR1 Public Sanitation & Retail Food Safety

Texas Department of State Health Services

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Trending Violations*:

- Employee Reporting Signage
- Well water testing
- Cold-holding Equipment

* see pages 3-4 for additional info.

Letter from the Editor

By Kassi Anthony

I hope you are enjoying our newsletters. We will have these newsletters archived on our regional website listed above approximately by the end of 2022.

I would like to draw your attention to two very important topics that have arisen over this last quarter:

1. Every public-school cafeteria enrolled in the National School Lunch and Breakfast Programs will now be required to obtain a certified food manager certificate. We will be checking for these during your Spring routine inspections.
2. Always use caution if an unfamiliar person claims to be a health inspector and wants to enter your facilities. Be sure to ask for a badge or identification card issued from TX DSHS or other relevant governing body, not a business card. Ask what the inspection is for. When in doubt, please reach out to your current health inspector or me; we will be glad to assist.

As we move forward into the holiday season, our focus will remain on completing 2022 routine inspections. Second semester inspections for public-school cafeterias will begin in January. The inspectors will be preparing for a couple of educational events for the Springtime, but we are on the look-out for additional opportunities.

We would love to hear any feedback from you. Just reply to your inspector or me on this email.

Good to Know!

By Melissa Hardin

Is Food Dating by the Manufacturer Required by Federal Law?

Except for infant formula, product dating from the manufacturer is not generally required by Federal regulations. There is no uniform or universally accepted system used for food dating in the United States. (This is not to be confused with date marking items in your cooler, which is required in food service facilities.)

What Types of Foods are Dated?

Open dating is found primarily on perishable foods such as meat, poultry, eggs, and dairy products. Closed or coded dating might appear on shelf stable products, such as cans and boxes of food.

“Use-by” dates usually refer to best quality and are not safety dates. Even if the date expires during home storage, a product should be safe, wholesome and of good quality if handled properly.

Types of Dates

- A "Sell-By" date tells the store how long to display the product for sale. You should buy the product before the date expires.
- A "Best if Used By (or before)" date is recommended for best flavor or quality. It is not a purchase or safety date.
- A "Use-By" date is the last date recommended for the use of the product while at peak quality. The date has been determined by the manufacturer of the product.
- "Closed or coded dates" are packing numbers for use by the manufacturer. Safety after Date Expires Except for "use-by" dates, product dates don't always pertain to home storage and use after purchase.

"Use-by" dates usually refer to best quality and are not safety dates. Even if the date expires during home storage, a product should be safe, wholesome and of good quality if handled properly. If product has a "use-by" date, follow that date. If product has a "sell-by" date or no date, cook or freeze the product.

FSIS: Food Product Dating: <https://www.fsis.usda.gov/food-safety/safe-food-handling-and-preparation/food-safety-basics/food-product-dating>



Temporary Event Permitting

By Mayra Vargas

All applications must be submitted and received at least 30 days before event.

There are two different types of temporary permits that you can choose from:

Single event permits - \$52.00 per event (per individual food booth/unit)

Permit valid for 14 consecutive days from the initial effective date. Only good for the one event. You can apply [online](#) for a single event permit or submit an [application](#) by mailing to the address on the application itself.

Mult-temp events- \$200.00

Permit is valid for 2 years from the initial event date. A permit is required for each individual food booth\unit. The multi temporary permit can be used for more than one event and good for 2 years. You can only apply for the multi-temporary permit by submitting the [application](#) in the mail.

Temporary Information

Inspection Checklist

Fact Sheet

Why...?

By Lindsey Eudey, Leslie Morgan, & Brittiany Bowling

...Employee Reporting Signage (L. Eudey)

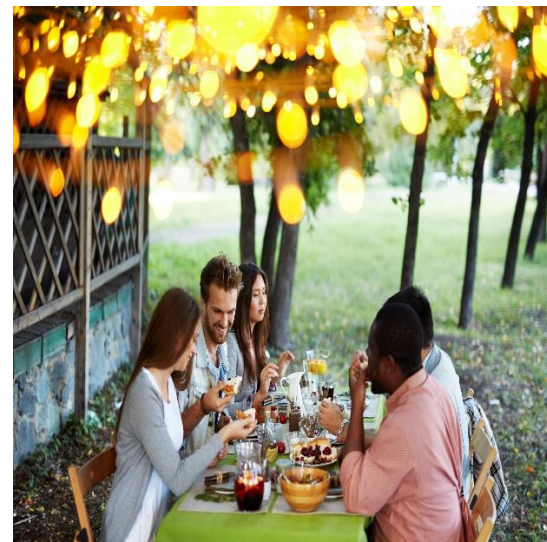
Ensuring that your employees are healthy is a monumental first step towards food safety. It is important that food establishment operators have a clear understanding of illnesses that can be easily transmitted to people through food. Managers are responsible for ensuring that all employees understand what illnesses are of importance. Managers are also responsible for reporting certain illnesses to their inspector if an employee is diagnosed.

To help managers with this important task, an [Employee Reporting Sign](#) is now required to be posted at every handwashing sink, in accordance with [TFER](#) §228.32. This form outlines the symptoms and specific illnesses that require managerial action.

...Well Water Testing (L. Morgan)

For purposes of food service, if you are not connected to city water, your well is considered public and will have testing requirements. ([TFER](#) §228.141-§228.143)

- If you serve more than 25 people and are open more than 60 days out of the year you are required to test your water monthly for the presence of coliform bacteria. You must have a PWSID number from TCEQ.
- If you serve less than 25 people and are not open more than 60 days out of the year you are required to test twice a year.



"If you really want to make a friend, go to someone's house and eat with him...the people who give you their food give you their heart."

- Cesar Chavez

...Cold-holding Equipment (B. Bowling)

So it happened, you came in to work and found the walk-in cooler broke down overnight. Now what? If the internal temperature of the food has been above 41°F for more than 4 hours, or if you are unsure how long the food has been out of temperature, the food must be discarded.

What foods must be discarded you ask? All foods that require time/temperature control for safety (TCS) to limit pathogenic microorganism growth or toxin formation. This includes an animal food that is raw or heat-treated; a plant food that is heat-treated or consists of raw seed sprouts, cut melons, cut leafy greens, cut tomatoes or mixtures of cut tomatoes that

are not modified in a way so that they are unable to support pathogenic microorganism growth or toxin formation, or garlic-in-oil mixtures that are not modified in a way so that they are unable to support pathogenic microorganism growth or toxin formation. A few examples are eggs, cut watermelon, cooked beans, potato salad, pulled pork.

How might this be prevented? Keeping a daily temperature log of the internal temperature of all coolers can help to identify when a problem may be arising. If you start to notice that the cooler is no longer able to maintain temperature effectively, it may be time to have the cooler repaired.

Links & Contacts

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

[Texas Interactive Jurisdictional Map](#)

[Retail Food Establishments - Home](#)

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

[Certified Food Manager Training Programs](#)

[Cottage Food Production Operations](#)

[Youth Camp Program - Home](#)

[Public Swimming Pools and Spas - Home](#)



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