

Back issues of this publication are available on our website: [cdhd.idaho.gov](http://cdhd.idaho.gov)

## IN THIS ISSUE:

- Mushroom Season Means Caution
- Norovirus 101
- Tips for Preventing the Spread of Norovirus
- Safe Food Handling Requirements for Poultry Products
- Safe Handling Instructions
- Standardizing Environmental Health Staff
- Bob Jue Honored with Lifetime Achievement

**We're A Tobacco Free Zone**



To protect the health of **everyone** at CDHD, no smoking or other tobacco use is permitted in our facilities or on our property, both indoors and out.

**Thank you for your cooperation.**



## Breaking News—Restaurant Inspection Scam

We have received reports from several restaurants of individuals calling claiming to be health inspectors. The callers make an appointment for an inspection or a complaint investigation and then never show up. The callers may give their first name and a phone number that is not theirs or is completely bogus. The fake inspectors reportedly ask the food establishment for phone numbers, email addresses and other information. Don't give it to them! ***This is a scam!***

The public health districts in Idaho are the only authorized agencies doing food establishment inspections. Inspections are done on an annual basis and are unannounced. All of our inspectors carry identification. If you receive a call from someone claiming to be a health inspector and it sounds suspicious please contact the Environmental Health area at Central District Health Department 327-7499.

## Mushroom Season Means Caution

Morels are in season. Many or most of them are harvested in forests burned in previous years. While some experts believe morels are safe to harvest, the inexperienced person can harvest false morels or morel look-alikes also.

Here is a cautionary tale from the Kalamazoo Gazette of May 27, 2011.

A spike in poison mushroom cases—including a Kalamazoo 2-year-old—has prompted the Michigan Department of Community Health to issue this warning to mushroom hunters:

Be sure you know what you're eating and how to prepare it correctly.

At least 11 Michigan people have been hospitalized so far this year [2011] with severe toxicity after eating [poisonous] mushrooms. Last year, there were no hospitalizations.

"We've had 53 calls so far this year [2011]," said Susan Smolinske, director of the Children's Hospital of Michigan Regional Poison Control Center in Detroit, the poison center



for the state. "Last year at this time, we had 26 (calls)."

The culprit is largely 2 mushrooms—the beefsteak (*Gyromitra esculenta*) and early morel (*Verpabohemica spp.*), Smolinske said.

Both mushrooms are commonly mistaken for true morels, the delicacy that sends gourmets into a frenzy every year. But even

*Continued on page 2*

*Food Review is sent biannually, free of charge to all licensed food establishments in our health district. We hope to include news of interest and importance. Topic ideas or articles written by the readers are welcome to be sent to: Editor, Food Review, CDHD, 707 N. Armstrong Pl., Boise, ID 83704. Extra copies of the newsletter are available at your local Health Department office.*

## Ada and Boise County

707 N. Armstrong Pl.  
Boise, ID 83704-0825  
Tel. (208) 327-7499  
Fax (208) 327-8553

### Rob Howarth

Environmental Health Director  
rhowarth@cdhd.idaho.gov

### Tom Schmalz - Supervisor

Facility Based Programs  
tschmalz@cdhd.idaho.gov

### Jerry Davis

jdavis@cdhd.idaho.gov

### Bud Fulleton

bfulleto@cdhd.idaho.gov

### Ann Potcher

apotcher@cdhd.idaho.gov

### Frank Isenberg

fisenber@cdhd.idaho.gov

### Deb Carney

dcarney@cdhd.idaho.gov

### Bob Jue

rjue@cdhd.idaho.gov

## Boise County

### Tyler Fortunati

tfortuna@cdhd.idaho.gov

## Elmore County

520 E. 8th North  
Mtn. Home, ID 83647  
Tel. (208) 587-4407  
Fax (208) 587-3521

### Marty Jones

mjones@cdhd.idaho.gov

## Valley County

703 N. 1st,  
McCall, ID 83638  
Tel. (208) 634-7194  
Fax (208) 634-2174

### Josh Kriz

jkriz@cdhd.idaho.gov

# Mushroom Season *Continued from page 1*

Beefsteak mushroom



Early morel mushroom



true morels can make people sick if they are improperly prepared, or if they are consumed with alcohol or in large quantities or by people who have developed sensitivity to the mushrooms, Smolinske said.

Untreated, people who eat false morels may develop confusion, delirium, seizures or go into coma. All of the people hospitalized this year [2011] have recovered, Smolinske said, but 3 of them suffered serious liver damage, including one who was temporarily placed on a liver transplant list. The health department alert states that the onset of illness after consuming beefsteak or early morel mushrooms is usually 6 to 48 hours.

Symptoms include nausea, vomiting, abdominal pain, diarrhea, dizziness, headache, muscle cramps, bloating and fatigue. Signs of liver damage include right-sided abdominal pain, hepatitis and jaundice (yellow skin) within 48 hours.

True morels (*Morchella* species) can make people sick too if undercooked or eaten raw, or if they are eaten with alcoholic beverages. Toxicity begins within a few hours and includes nausea, vomiting and abdominal pain lasting less than 24 hours, the health department advisory says.

Some people are genetically vulnerable, or develop a sensitivity to true morels, even after eating them for years without incident, Smolinske said. "It is a kind of Russian roulette," she said, since people don't know when that sensitivity is developing until they become ill.

Chefs are well acquainted with the specifics of mushroom identification. "In everything we do, we buy from approved sources, folks we trust, people we have developed relationships with," said Matthew Pietsch, executive chef at Salt of the Earth restaurant in Fennville.

There are definitely more people selling mushrooms this season than there have been in past years, he said. "It's great that some centuries-old practices are being revived, and it's wonderful people are finding these treasures here in Michigan; we're so lucky," he said. "But when people get sick because of lack of awareness on the part of finders or providers, it's a double-edged sword."

"Unless you are on a foray with a mycologist, it's a hazard."

**As the saying among mycologists/fungus experts goes, "There are old mushroom hunters, and there are bold mushroom hunters, but there are no old, bold mushroom hunters,"**

**~ Susan Smolinske, Director  
of The Children's Hospital  
of Michigan Regional Poison  
Control Center**



**Ordinarily we would run an article on Norovirus during the winter, as it is known as the “winter vomiting” illness. However, current research indicates that norovirus stays in the community year-round. Protecting yourself against norovirus infection will help prevent your exposure to other food-borne diseases.**

# Norovirus 101

## Noroviruses - the “stomach bug”

Infection with norovirus causes gastroenteritis (inflammation of the stomach and intestines), which most commonly results in diarrhea, vomiting, nausea, and stomach cramping. Norovirus illness is sometimes referred to as “stomach flu,” but it is not related to the flu, which is a respiratory illness caused by the influenza virus.

You can be infected with norovirus more than once in your lifetime. One reason for this is that there are many different types of noroviruses, and being infected with one type doesn’t necessarily protect against infection from another type. In addition, immunity acquired from natural infection is thought to last for only a year or less.

## Food handlers can spread norovirus to others

Persons working with food who are sick with norovirus gastroenteritis are a particular risk to others because they handle the food and drink many other people will consume. The virus is very small and shed (discharged from the body through vomit or stool) in great numbers. Thus—without meaning to—a sick food handler can easily contaminate the food he or she is handling. Many of those eating the contaminated food may become ill, and an outbreak may result.

Outbreaks of norovirus gastroenteritis have taken place in nursing homes, hospitals, restaurants, cruise ships, schools, banquet halls, summer camps, and family dinners—in other words, places where people often consume water and/or food prepared or handled by others. It is estimated that more than half of all food-related outbreaks of illness are caused by norovirus. In many of these cases, sick food handlers were involved in the spread of the virus.

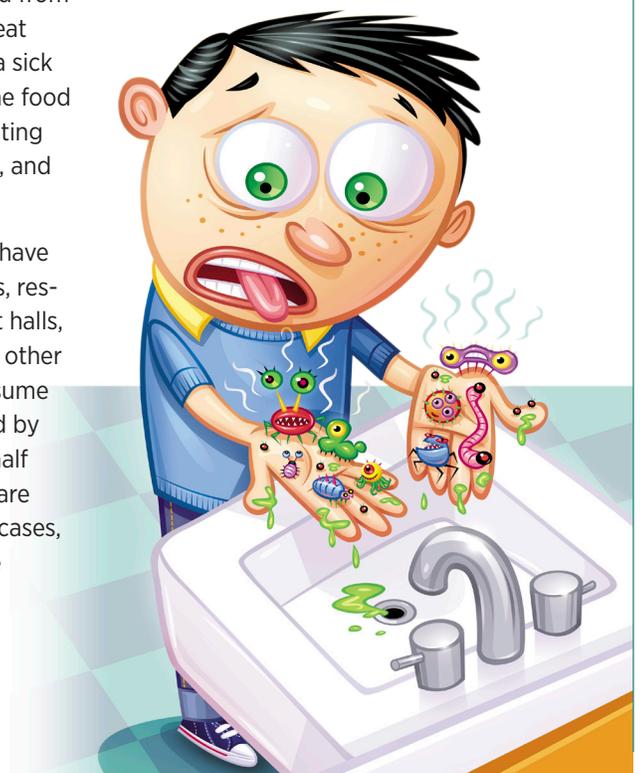
## Norovirus spreads quickly and easily

Noroviruses are found in the vomit and stool (fecal matter) of infected persons from the day they begin to feel ill, and the virus continues to be present in the stool for 2 weeks or more after the infected person feels better. Infected persons are considered most contagious during the first 3 days of illness; it is unclear whether virus that is shed beyond 3 days is infectious.

## People can become infected with the virus by:

- Eating food or drinking liquids that are contaminated with norovirus,
- Touching surfaces or objects contaminated with norovirus, and then placing their hand in their mouth, and
- Having direct contact with another person who is infected and showing symptoms (for example, when caring for someone with illness, or sharing foods or eating utensils with someone who is ill).

*Continued on page 4*



# Norovirus

Continued from page 3

Food and drinks can easily become contaminated with norovirus because the virus is very small and because it takes a very small amount (fewer than 100 norovirus particles) to make a person sick. Although the virus cannot multiply outside a human body, billions of norovirus particles are shed by infected people. These shed particles can cause illness if they get into food or water.

## Food can be contaminated by:

- Direct contact with contaminated hands
- Direct contact with work surfaces that are contaminated with infectious stool or vomit
- Tiny droplets of vomitus that spray through the air when an infected person vomits

Some foods can be contaminated with norovirus **before** being delivered to a restaurant or store. Several outbreaks have been caused by the consumption of oysters harvested from contaminated waters. Other food products, such as salads and fruit, can also be contaminated at their source. However, most norovirus contamination of food is thought to occur during preparation and service by food handlers who are infected with the virus.

## Tips for Preventing the Spread of Norovirus

The following practical tips should be followed to help prevent the spread of norovirus:

**Do not prepare food while ill:** Many local and state health departments require that food handlers and preparers with gastroenteritis not work until 2 or 3 days after they feel better. Food handlers who were recently sick can be given different duties in the restaurant (for example, working the cash register or as a host or hostess) so that they do not have to handle food.

**Practice proper hand hygiene:** Wash your hands carefully with soap and water, especially after using the toilet and before preparing or handling food. Noroviruses are found in the vomit and stool of infected people from the day they start to feel ill, and the virus continues to be present in the stool for as long as 2 to 3 weeks after an infected person feels better. Thus, continued care in washing hands is important in preventing the spread of this virus. Alcohol-based hand sanitizers (containing at least 62% ethanol) may be a helpful addition to hand washing, but they are not a substitute for washing with soap and water. For more information about hand hygiene, see “Handwashing: Clean Hands Save Lives.” [www.cdc.gov/handwashing/](http://www.cdc.gov/handwashing/)



**Take care in the kitchen:** Food items that might have become contaminated with norovirus should be thrown out. Carefully wash fruits and vegetables, and cook oysters and other shellfish thoroughly before eating them. Oysters should be obtained from reputable sources, and appropriate documentation should be kept in case trace back is needed. Sick children and infants in diapers should be excluded from food preparation areas.

**Clean and disinfect contaminated surfaces:** After an episode of illness, such as vomiting or diarrhea, immediately clean, disinfect, and rinse contaminated surfaces. Use a chlorine bleach solution with a concentration of 1000–5000 ppm (5–25 tablespoons of household bleach [5.25%] per gallon of water) or other disinfectant registered as effective against norovirus by the Environmental Protection Agency. [www.epa.gov/oppad001/list\\_g\\_norovirus.pdf](http://www.epa.gov/oppad001/list_g_norovirus.pdf)

**Wash laundry thoroughly:** Linens (towels, tablecloths, napkins) and clothing that are soiled to any extent with vomit or stool should be handled carefully—without agitating the item—to avoid spreading the virus. The items should be laundered with detergent at the maximum available cycle length and then machine dried.



# Standardizing Environmental Health Staff

Frank Isenberg and Bob Jue wish to thank all the establishments that allowed us to train and standardize our staff in conducting inspections. The standardization process is intended to make the inspection among our staff more uniform. Hopefully, each staffer will recognize a violation or a non-violation and know where to place it in the inspection report.

## Big News!

The inspection report will also be easier to read as staff has been provided 21st century technology. We are in the process of training to input our inspections into a "tablet" (iPad-like device) that recognizes the staff's handwritten comments and will print them into the form when it is printed at the end of the inspection. Yeah! We all will benefit from that improvement in the form! No more "hieroglyphics" to interpret. The color sections of the form will no longer be there, unless we get portable color printers – not likely.

Let us know what you think when you receive your first inspection report with this new system.



# Safe Food Handling Requirements for Poultry Products

Central District Health Department wishes to inform farmer's market organizers and persons who process and sell eggs, meat and poultry about the USDA safe food handling labeling requirement 21 CFR 101.17(h) for eggs and 9 CFR 317.2(1) and 9 CFR 381.125(b) for meat and poultry. All of these requirements are reflected in Idaho Food Code 3-201.11 (F) and (G).

[NOTE: CFR is the Code of Federal Regulations and can be accessed via the internet.]

All producers and processors are required to affix labels on their products that show the Name & Address of Manufacturer/Processor and the Safe Handling Instructions.

## SHELL EGGS

21 CFR 101.17(h) says:

(h) Shell eggs. (1) The label of all shell eggs, whether in intrastate or interstate commerce, shall bear the following statement: "SAFE HANDLING INSTRUCTIONS: To prevent illness from bacteria: keep eggs refrigerated, cook eggs until yolks are firm, and cook foods containing eggs thoroughly."

(2) The label statement required by paragraph (h)(1) of this section shall appear prominently and conspicuously, with the words SAFE HANDLING INSTRUCTIONS in bold type, on the information panel or principal display panel of the container.

(3) The label statement required by paragraph (h)(1) of this section shall be set off in a box by use of hairlines.

Read more: <http://cfr.vlex.com/vid/101-labeling-warning-safe-handling-19705607#ixzz19WjZv5jh>

## MEAT and POULTRY

At right is a chart showing the content of food labels associated with poultry producers of various capacities. A picture of a safe food handling label is also shown.

Poultry processors must also add "Exempt – PL 90-492" if they qualify for exemption to the USDA Poultry Products Inspection Act: [www.fsis.usda.gov/oppde/rdad/fsisnotices/poultry\\_slaughter\\_exemption\\_0406.pdf](http://www.fsis.usda.gov/oppde/rdad/fsisnotices/poultry_slaughter_exemption_0406.pdf)

### Safe Handling Instructions

Some food products may contain bacteria that could cause illness if the product is mishandled or cooked improperly. For your protection, follow these safe handling instructions.

- Keep refrigerated or frozen. Thaw in refrigerator or microwave.
- Keep raw meat and poultry separate from other foods. Wash working surfaces (including cutting boards), utensils, and hands after touching raw meat or poultry.
- Cook thoroughly.
- Keep hot foods hot. Refrigerate leftovers immediately or discard.

Rationale statement modified per 9 CFR 381.125(b) (2) (ii) as product is not inspected

Above is a Safe Handling Label for raw poultry that is not USDA inspected.

	Producer Grower – 1,000 Limit	Producer Grower – 20,000 Limit	Producer Grower or Other Person	Small Enterprise
Name of Product				YES
Ingredients				YES
Statement of Quantity / Weight				YES
Name & Address of Manufacturer / Processor	YES	YES	YES	YES
Date of Packaging				YES
Exempt – PL90-492 or explanation	YES	YES	YES	YES
Safe Handling Instructions	YES	YES	YES	YES



**Central District  
Health Department**

Environmental Health  
707 N. Armstrong Pl.  
Boise, ID 83704-0825

PRSRT STD  
U.S. POSTAGE  
PAID  
PERMIT NO. 1  
BOISE, ID



## Bob Jue Honored with Lifetime Achievement Award

Bob Jue, an Environmental Health Specialist with the Central District Health District since 1976, was recently honored with the Lifetime Achievement Award by the Idaho Environmental Health Association. The award is given to those who consistently display leadership and dedication to their profession and whose efforts have had a demonstrable impact on protecting public health.

Jue's primary responsibilities at CDHD involve food protection, where he serves as the primary environmental health epidemiologist and lead foodborne illness outbreak investigator. He serves in a leadership role with the Conference for Food Protection and has presented several times at the National Environmental Health Association. Jue is also the health district's primary contact with the Food and Drug Administration.

"We are fortunate that Bob Jue has been with CDHD for 34 years," said Rob Howarth, Program Manager of Environmental Health at CDHD. "His contributions to disease prevention have undoubtedly saved the lives of many Idahoans."

In addition to food protection, Jue is an expert on animal bites and rabies prevention, as well as the district's resident entomologist. He plans to retire from CDHD sometime this summer.