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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.



Infections from Some Foodborne Germs Increased

While Others Remained Unchanged in 2012

The nation's annual food safety report card was released in April and it shows that 2012 rates of infections from two germs spread commonly through food have increased significantly when compared to a baseline period of 2006–2008, while rates of most others have not changed during the same period. The data are part of the Foodborne Diseases Active Surveillance Network (FoodNet) report released by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). Infections from *Campylobacter* — which is linked to many foods, including poultry, raw milk and produce — has risen up to 14 percent in 2012 compared to 2006–2008. They were at their highest level since 2000. *Vibrio* infections as a whole were up 43 percent when compared with the rates observed in 2006–2008. *Vibrio vulnificus*, the most severe strain, has not increased. Foodborne *vibrio* infections are most often associated with eating raw shellfish.

“The U.S. food supply remains one of the safest in the world,” said CDC Director Tom Frieden, M.D., M.P.H. “However, some foodborne diseases continue to pose a challenge. We have the ability, through investments in emerging technologies, to identify outbreaks even more quickly and implement interventions even faster to protect people from the dangers posed by contaminated food.”

While progress had been made in the past few years in reducing infections from a dangerous type of *E. coli*, Shiga toxin-producing *E. coli* (STEC) O157, rates in 2012 went back up. Incidence of STEC O157 infection had decreased to 0.95 per 100,000 population in 2010, but last year went back up to 1.12 per 100,000 population.

FoodNet, a collaboration among CDC, ten state health departments, the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Food Safety and Inspection Service (FSIS), and the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA), tracks whether selected infections are increasing or decreasing. Overall in 2012, FoodNet's 10 sites reported 19,531 illnesses, 4,563 hospitalizations and 68 deaths from nine germs commonly spread through foods.

Campylobacter is associated with eating raw or undercooked poultry, raw milk dairy products, contaminated produce and contaminated water. It is also acquired through contact with infected animals. *Campylobacter* usually causes diarrhea, stomach pain and fever that resolve in about a week. *Vibrio* lives naturally in sea water and foodborne *Vibrio* infection is most often linked to eating raw oysters. It is rare, but can cause serious, life-threatening infection, especially in people with liver disease.

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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.

Las Vegas Restaurant Linked to 89 Illnesses

Las Vegas television station KVVU, Fox 5, reported in May that as many as 86 patrons and three workers may have contracted *salmonellosis* from a popular Las Vegas restaurant that shut down following a health inspection by the Southern Nevada Health Department (SNHD).

The health authority forced the temporary closure of the Firefly restaurant and its sister business Dragonfly restaurant until the outbreak could be fully investigated.

SNHD officials said at least a dozen people were hospitalized due to the salmonella outbreak. They believed those who ate food from the restaurant between the 21st and 25th of April 2013 were affected. Three employees also were affected in the outbreak, officials said at the news conference.

Health officials were looking at 10 menu items to see whether any of those were the cause of the outbreak.

The inspection report by SNHD found food had been inappropriately stored at temperatures either above or below recommended levels and that raw ground beef and seafood had been stored above cooked chicken. The eatery was also cited for employees handling food without gloves and preparing food next to cleaning chemicals. In all the restaurant was hit with 44 demerit points, which under Nevada law was enough to force the health department to close the facility.

Dragonfly, which is located next to Firefly, was also cited for 47 demerits connected to its sister restaurant's inspection.

The case serves as a good example of the dangers of failing to follow food safety guidelines. Not only did dozens of people get sick, but the reputation of the restaurant was badly damaged, not to mention the possibility of lawsuits from the patrons who got ill.



Violation	Observations and Corrections
2) - Observed employee handle ready-to-eat foods (garnish) with bare hands	
- Observed employee put on gloves without hand washing.	
6) Observed condensation from storage rack (that has dried food, grease, debris buildup) drip into open containers of food on level below.	Protect Voluntarily



Infections from Some Foodborne Germs Increased

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People who want to reduce their risk of foodborne illness should assume raw chicken and other meat carry bacteria that can cause illness, and should not allow these foods to cross-contaminate surfaces and other foods. People should also cook chicken and other meat well, avoid consuming unpasteurized milk and unpasteurized soft cheeses. It is always best to cook seafood thoroughly, to at least 145°F. People at greater risk for foodborne illness with the most severe outcomes, such as pregnant women and people with weakened immune systems, should not eat raw or partially cooked seafood, including oysters that have been treated after harvest.

For more information on avoiding illnesses from food, please visit www.foodsafety.gov.

Can Restaurant Menus Carry *Salmonella* and *E. coli*?

When we are holding a restaurant menu to select a delicious item for a meal, the last thing we are thinking about is *Salmonella* and *E. coli*. But maybe we should.

A study was conducted involving two restaurants in Texas. The study was comparing laminated and paper menus as a means for bacteria contamination and transfer.

Previous studies have been conducted investigating the cleanliness of cutting boards, faucet handles, refrigerator door handles, microwave oven controls, and bin lids that were visually clean. These items failed to meet hygienic requirements based on traditional microbiology testing. It was suggested that harmful bacteria (pathogens) may multiply on surfaces that appear clean. This may result in cross contamination that can lead to foodborne illness outbreaks. Previous studies have demonstrated that harmful bacteria can survive several hours to days on surfaces such as plastic, wood, and stainless steel.

The objective of this study was to determine if menus had microorganisms present, the survival of microorganisms and the transfer abilities of *Salmonella* and *E. coli*.

Results showed that *Salmonella* and *E. coli* survived on inoculated laminated menus for 72 hours and 48 hours respectively. Neither organism survived on paper menus in this study. This could be due to the paper's loss of water due to evaporation.

Cross contamination could occur if an ill customer or restaurant employee touches a menu or the menu is in contact with a contaminated surface. *Salmonella* and *E. coli* were transferred from finger tips to menus and menus to fingertips for both wet and dry menus in the first six hours. No detectable transfer occurred after 24 hours for dry menus and 48 hours for wet menus.

Restaurant managers should schedule routine cleaning and sanitizing of laminated menus.

It might be a good idea to wash hands with soap and warm water after handling the menu and before you eat your tasty meal.

Source: March 2013 *Journal of Environmental Health*



Special Event Food Service

Temporary Food Establishments

Have you noticed the increase in special events and the increased number of food vendors? Yes, these fun events bring people together in our communities for fun and good causes. Please be aware that whenever you participate as a food vendor at a special event, the Idaho Food Code requires that you submit an application at least one month in advance. Completing a Temporary Food Establishment application well in advance allows our customer service representatives and health inspectors to review the application and menu items in an effective and timely manner. This applies to both indoor and outdoor events.

According to the Idaho Food Code section 1-201(95) the definition of a temporary food establishment is ***a food establishment that operates for a period of no more than 14 consecutive days in conjunction with a single event or celebration.*** Therefore your application must be accurate, and shall include, name of event, location, menu, and food service operation site plan. The site plan should include tables, hand wash stations and other equipment. Keep your food protected from potential contamination. Product temperature control is crucial. Do not forget your thermometers.

Summertime temperatures can cause refrigerated foods to heat up fast. Be sure you have refrigerated equipment that can keep your food at 41° or below. Plenty of ice and dry ice may be needed on hot days to keep food at temporary special events cold.

A food establishment is defined as:

an operation that is conducted in a mobile, stationary, temporary, or permanent facility or location; where consumption is on or off the premises and regardless weather or not there is a charge for the food.

You can access Temporary Food Establishment application online at www.cdhd.idaho.gov/EH/food/forms.htm

You will also find our Food Vendor packet for temporary food establishments at this site.

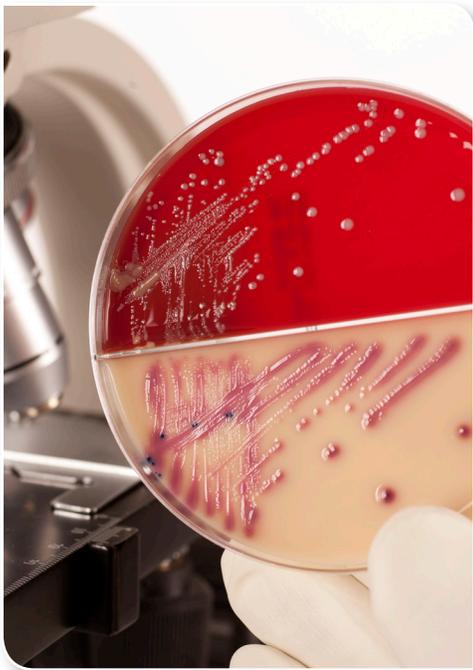


Death from *Staphylococcus aureus*

Staphylococcus aureus or “Staph” has been implicated in reports of illness from several states and the death of a teenager in Virginia. This organism can be found in our nose, throat, or on our skin.

Usually, staph bacteria don’t cause any harm. However, sometimes they get inside the body through a break in the skin and cause an infection. These infections are usually treated with antibiotics. When common antibiotics don’t kill the staph bacteria, it means the bacteria have become resistant to those antibiotics. This type of staph is called MRSA (Methicillin-Resistant *Staphylococcus Aureus*) and pronounced “mer-sah.”

In the community, most MRSA infections are skin infections that may appear as pustules or boils which often are red, swollen, painful, or have pus or other drainage. These skin infections commonly occur at sites of visible skin trauma, such as cuts and abrasions, and areas of the body covered by hair (e.g., back of neck, groin, buttock, armpit, beard area of men). If the sore does not heal, some people think it is a spider bite.



Why are we discussing this in the Food Review?

Thirty-three percent of us have colonies of *staphylococcus* in our noses. Staph can be introduced into a cooked food from our hands or from a cough or sneeze. If staph grows in the food it creates a toxin that causes vomiting and other symptoms in the person who eats the contaminated food. Our grandparents knew this type of food poisoning as ‘ptomaine poisoning.’ It is a term no longer used.

A food worker may have a boil or draining cut or wound that is a staph infection. This person should be restricted from working with food or clean utensils. A health professional should culture the wound to determine the infection-causing bacteria.

How do you prevent spread to food or other persons?

Handwashing is the best prevention because hands may touch the sore or dressing covering it. Prevention is best accomplished with handwashing using liquid soap (DO NOT USE bar soap), properly using alcohol-gel sanitizers containing more than 62 percent alcohol, and regular bathing. Use paper towels for hand drying. Do not use cloth towels for hand drying.

Disinfecting surfaces that hands touch can also help prevent the spread of disease. Surfaces to clean include door knobs, equipment handles and switches, light switches, menus, toilets, pens/pencils, clipboards, food containers, walk-in and reach-in doors, cutting boards, stove knobs, drawer handles, telephones, computer keyboards and toilets.

MRSA can be found in the community (fortunately, only 1 percent of us have colonies in our nose) and direct transmission is from hands or open wounds. Athletic sports are often sources of close contact where staph

can be passed from person to person. As previously mentioned, it can be indirectly transmitted to others through cloth towels, sheets, clothes, personal items (combs, razors,), and bandages/dressings used to cover sores.

Re-infection is common but can be prevented with good hygiene and handwashing. Antibiotics are available to treat severe infections.

Wash the clothes of someone with MRSA separately and don’t allow their dirty clothes to touch yours. Wash clothes in hot water and dry in high heat. Change bed sheets regularly.

Pets can get MRSA. If your pet has sores a veterinarian should check them. Pets known to get MRSA are dogs, cats, horses, and birds.



Wound care: Avoid contact with other people’s wounds. If you assist someone in changing bandages, wear disposable gloves and discard after one use. Keep the wound clean, dry and covered.

Changes in the Air for Honey Industry

Information adapted from the *Idaho Business Review*

Patrick Guzzle, the Idaho Food Protection program manager for the state Department of Health and Welfare, inadvertently set off a minor storm of concern when he gave his first-ever talk about his department's rules for hobbyist beekeepers.

Guzzle was asked to speak in December of last year to honey producers at the annual meeting of the Idaho Honey Industry Association. He says all he did was reiterate rules that have been on the books for as long as he can remember about who can sell honey and where.

But his talk, and its retelling among beekeepers, set off rumors that the state is cracking down on hobbyists who sell their honey in an unauthorized manner.

In January the House and Senate Agriculture Committees passed new rules imposing the state's first standards on the content and quality of all honey sold in Idaho stores. The rules, developed by the industry and the state Department of Agriculture, went into effect on the last day of the legislative session.

Meanwhile, hobbyist beekeeping is on the rise in Idaho and elsewhere. It's the latest iteration of a back-to-the land movement that has also landed many chicken coops in urban backyards.

There's also a new interest in raw honey as a healthier alternative to sugar. Many people believe local raw honey can serve as an antidote to allergies.

The Idaho Department of Agriculture estimates there are hundreds of hobbyist beekeepers, those who have 49 colonies or fewer.

But the state Health Department's perceived crackdown on home-based honey producers has some beekeepers worried.

Health Department policy is that home beekeepers must bottle their honey in

a commercial-grade kitchen that can be inspected. A commercial kitchen is out of the reach of the very small-scale honey producers, those with just a colony or two of bees in the backyard.

The rule isn't new. It has been on the books so long that Guzzle can't even say when it was codified. And it applies to other goods such as jam, jelly, baked goods, and syrup that are often made on a small scale.

Beekeepers say Health and Welfare is getting more serious about enforcement, even though Guzzle says the number of inspections hasn't changed.

Details of the reported crackdown are unclear; many beekeepers say they've heard they can't even sell honey to a neighbor anymore. Some beekeepers even believe they won't be welcomed back to farmers markets without a certificate from Health and Welfare.

Guzzle says that's not true, and now he's trying to set the record straight. Health and Welfare doesn't inspect honey producers who sell directly to the consumer, whether they're handing the jar to a co-worker or leaning across the table at a farmers market to make change. But if the honey ends up at the grocery store (or a restaurant), the regulations kick in. That's because all food establishments are required to get their wares from approved sources.



Creating a Properly Made Ice Bath

The easiest way to test the accuracy of any thermometer is in a properly made ice bath. If you do this carefully, your ice bath will be 32.0°F within ±0.1°F. If you are not careful, the ice bath can be off by several whole degrees. (Just a cup with ice water in it can be 12 or more degrees too high.)

Step One: Fill with ice

Making a proper ice bath is all about keeping a proper ice-to-water ratio. Fill a vessel all the way to the top with ice. Crushed ice is preferred because there are fewer gaps between the ice, however cubed ice will also work fine.

Step Two: Add Water

Slowly add water to fill the spaces between the ice. Fill about 1/2" below the top of the ice. Let the mixture sit for a minute or two to allow the temperature of the water to settle. If you see the ice starting to float off the bottom of the vessel, pour off some water and add more ice. Water below the ice will not be at 32°F.

Step Three: Insert the Probe

Once the mixture has rested for a minute or two, insert your probe (or thermometer stem) into the mixture and stir in the vertical center of the ice slurry. Stirring the probe keeps the sensor from resting against an ice cube, which will affect your

reading. Keep the probe tip away from the side walls and don't allow it to rest against the bottom of the vessel. Doing so will give you inaccurate temperature readings. If the thermometer has an extremely fast and sensitive needle tip you MUST gently stir the probe or you will find colder and warmer spots in the ice bath. Stirring equilibrates the temperature throughout the vessel.

Step Four: Confirm Calibration

Your thermometer should read 32°F (0°C) in the ice bath. Adjust your dial thermometer as directed by the manufacturer; however, before you attempt to adjust a digital, instant-read thermometer, check that the readings are within the manufacturer's accuracy specifications. (Look for a ±°F on the documentation included with the instrument.) If it's within the specified tolerance, don't adjust.

As a rule of thumb, it's always a good idea to keep track of your calibrations to monitor the performance of the thermometer over a period of time. Misuse can cause the instrument to fall out of spec more often, and a



record of temperatures may help you take corrective actions to preserve the useful life of the thermometer.



Educational Posters for Retail Food Employees

The FDA has a new source of training materials that are easy to understand that can be used to educate staff.

These posters/storyboards are designed to enhance food safety training efforts at the retail level by helping food service employees understand the important role they play in protecting public health. They are available in nine different languages, including Arabic, English, Hindi, Korean, Russian, Simplified Chinese, Traditional Chinese, Spanish, and Vietnamese.

These materials are not copyrighted. You may post these materials on your website and distribute them freely. We kindly ask, however, that you credit FDA when using or posting the materials.

Materials will soon be available that address cooking, cold holding, date marking, approved sources, and chemical use and storage.

Go to <http://tiny.cc/o26tyw> for your free educational story board posters to educate staff about foodborne illness prevention.



Central District Health Department

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

Food Safety Training Classes at CDHD

CDHD offers three levels of food safety training. The Basic Food Safety Video is a series of short videos designed for entry level food service workers. Find the videos on our website at cdhd.idaho.gov/EH/food/food_safety_videos.htm or on YouTube. Access to the videos is free and there is no certification offered.

The **Idaho Food Safety and Sanitation Certification** course is four hours of training that provides food safety certification good for five years under the state's Food Protection Program. The cost is \$33 and registration is required. Call 327-7499 for more information.

Finally CDHD offers the full eight hour **ServSafe® Manager Certification** course. ServSafe® is a program of the National Restaurant Association Educational Foundation and is designed to provide food service managers with the knowledge necessary to meet state and federal standards. The certification is good nationwide for five years. Registration is required. The cost is \$100 and includes lunch. Call 327-7499 to register.



CLASS SCHEDULE

All classes are held at the Central District Health Department
 707 N Armstrong Place, Boise

Idaho Food Safety and Sanitation Certification Class time is 8:30 a.m. – 12:30 p.m.	ServSafe® Manager Certification Class time is 8:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m.
Wednesday August 21st	Tuesday August 20th
Wednesday September 11th	Wednesday September 18th
Thursday October 24th	Wednesday October 23rd
Wednesday November 13th	Wednesday November 20th
Wednesday December 4th	