

the food product. If the tests do not yield satisfactory results recipes will need to be modified and tested again. Requirements for a HACCP Plan for ROP can be found in Sections 73 and 195 of the Indiana State Retail Food Establishment Sanitation Requirements Title 410 IAC 7-24.

Canning foods is a type of reduced oxygen packaging that requires specialized training and cannot be done without a person that has been through the training commonly referred to as Better Processing School. Additional resources regarding developing HACCP plans and information about Better Processing School are available from the Health Department.

Notify the Health Department of Emergencies By Michelle Church

If your food service facility has an emergency such as a fire, flood, or sewage backup, operations must immediately cease and the Health Department must be contacted immediately. It is important to note that some emergency situations require immediate closure of the facility. Depending on the situation, either contact 911 or our office. A member of dispatch at 911 will notify an employee of the Health Department, day or night. An Environmentalist will come to your facility as soon as possible, evaluate the emergency, and provide a list of necessary procedures prior to re-opening. This may include cleaning and/or discarding items. Once the listed items have been corrected, contact your regular inspector, who will come back to your facility. After verifying that the establishment is in compliance with all applicable health codes, an Environmentalist will perform a re-opening inspection and your facility will be given permission to re-open. With some emergencies, such as fire damage, permission to re-open may also be required from the local Building and Fire Departments.

The Indiana Retail Food Establishment Sanitation Requirements Tile 410 IAC 7-24, Section 109 states:

(a): "Except as specified in subsection (b), the owner or operator of the retail food establishment shall **immediately discontinue operations and notify the regulatory authority** if an imminent health hazard may exist because of an emergency, such as the following:

- 1) Fire.
- 2) Flood.
- 3) An extended interruption of electrical or water service.
- 4) A sewage backup.
- 5) A misuse of poisonous or toxic materials.
- 6) An onset of apparent foodborne illness outbreak.
- 7) A gross insanitary occurrence or condition.
- 8) Other circumstances that may endanger public health (such as small fires and loss of water).

(b): The owner or operator of a retail food establishment need not discontinue operations in an area of an establishment that is unaffected by the imminent health hazard.
(c): **If operations are discontinued as specified under this section or otherwise according to law, the retail food establishment shall obtain approval from the regulatory authority before resuming operations."**



FOOD SAFETY NEWS

Elkhart County Health Department



Certified Food Manager Requirements

By Jordan Wiseman

As an employee or owner of a food service, you have most likely heard of the term certified food protection manager (CFPM). The Indiana State Food Code (410 IAC 7-24) requires a food employee who has shown proficiency through passing a test that is part of an accredited program per the requirements set forth in 410 IAC 7-22 Certification Of Food Handler Requirements. A food establishment must have at least one employee that is a certified food protection manager. You can have more than one



certified employee. In fact, it is encouraged because if the one person who is certified leaves your establishment, the food service is now without a CFPM. An establishment has 3 months to replace a certified food protection manager. When you open a new

food service or change ownership, you have 6 months to comply with this rule. Operating without a certified manager is a critical violation.

There are exemptions to this requirement, but you are more than welcome to have a CFPM if you are exempt. If a facility's food handling is limited to any of the following, a CFPM is not required:

- Does not include the cooking of raw food of animal origin.
- Heating or serving only precooked foods. Preparing or serving a continental breakfast such as rolls, coffee, juice, milk, and cold cereal.
- Preparing or serving nonalcoholic or alcoholic beverages that are not potentially hazardous beverages or ice.

- Preparing or serving packaged or unpackaged low hazard foods, including elephant ears, funnel cakes, cotton candy, confectionaries, baked goods, popcorn, and chips and grinding coffee beans.
- Providing prepackaged food in its original package.
- A non-profit organization that is exempt from federal income taxation under Section 501(c)(3).

Did you know there is a difference between a certified food protection manager and a food handler certificate? The manager certification is what is required for a food service. It is a proctored exam, which means you have to take the exam with someone watching. If you pass the exam, the certification period lasts 5 years. The food handler course is given a certificate of achievement or completion but is not a certified, accredited exam.

Any person that is a CFPM at one restaurant cannot be the certified person at another restaurant location at the same time, unless the restaurants are on the same property or on contiguous properties.

Our office keeps record of CFPMs from each licensed facility and a copy of their certificates on file. If there is a new CFPM at your facility and we do not have it on file, you may email it to your inspector, drop it off at our office, or fax it. Make sure you provide the name of your facility and address on each certificate so we can file it with the correct facility. If you ever have any questions regarding CFPM, do not hesitate to call our office at (574) 971-4600.



Special points of interest:

- While only about 2% of adults suffer from food allergies, taking steps toward avoiding food allergic responses at your facility may help to make dining out easier for all of your customers. If a customer should have an allergic reaction while eating at your facility, be sure that all employees know what signs to look for and what steps to take. Quick and correct action may save someone's life.

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Gloves: Are you using them correctly? By Bailey Burt

Michael Jackson, Mickey Mouse and even OJ Simpson are famously known for gloves. Today's spotlight though is on single use gloves. So what are you making your facility's single use gloves famous for? Never being worn? Never being changed? Hopefully for always being available and worn properly.

Single-use gloves can help keep food safe by creating a barrier between hands and food. The CDC estimates Norovirus as the leading cause of foodborne illness in the United States. Wearing gloves can help protect food from human pathogens such as Norovirus along with other viruses and bacteria. And while single use gloves provide a great barrier, they are not magic. They must be used properly and changed frequently.

The Indiana Food Code 410 IAC 7-24 Section 246 gives direction on how gloves should be worn and changed. Hands must always be washed prior to placing gloves on.

Gloves should be changed at these times:

- As soon as they become dirty or torn
- Before beginning a different task

- After an interruption, such as answering a phone or touching one's face and
- After handling raw meats and before handling ready to eat foods

Some other things to remember:

- Wearing gloves is never a substitute for handwashing.
- Select the correct glove size
- Gloves must be approved for handling food
- Single use gloves are not to be reused.

While single use gloves are of course only to be used once, we hope that you'll use this information over and over again.



Outdoor Cooking and Smoking By Zoe Bruni



Have you wanted to expand your food establishment out onto the patio and offer smoked or grilled foods? Before making this decision, it is important to understand the Outdoor Cooking and Grilling Guidelines.

To start, grilling and smoking cannot take place on an open patio

space. In accordance to the Indiana Retail Food Establishment Sanitation Requirements Title 410 IAC 7-24, more commonly known as the State Food Code, the outdoor cooking area must have overhead, waterproof protection as well as walls that can act as pest barrier for the cooking space. If the area will be used at night, lighting of at least 70-foot candles must be installed. Whether the area is a fully enclosed structure similar to a shed or a hard framed screen enclosure with a solid roof is up to the establishment, but the project must go through a plan review and receive approval before starting construction.

Along with an enclosure structure, the set up must be on an impervious surface. In accordance with Section 399 of the State Food Code, the structure must be built on cement, asphalt, or other hard, washable floor. Zoning, building and fire codes must be taken into consideration and followed as well.

The outdoor cooking space will have the same requirements to follow as the indoor cooking space at the facility. The space must have a hand washing facility with both hot and cold running water. The hand washing area must be equipped with soap and paper towels for proper hand washing. Food, both uncooked and cooked, must be stored at proper hot and cold

holding temperatures for food safety. Probe thermometers must be provided in the outdoor space and used to check temperatures of the food. Similar to the indoor kitchen, the area must be restricted and cannot have customers or unnecessary persons in the cooking area.

The outdoor cooking area should not be used as an extension of the indoor kitchen. A majority of the food preparation should still take place in the indoor, licensed kitchen. Food being transported from the kitchen to the outdoor cooking area, as well as cooked food going from the outdoor facility back in to the kitchen, must be transported in covered containers to help prevent potential contamination of the food. All the equipment and utensils used in the outdoor area must be washed, rinsed, and sanitized inside the licensed facility.

The question is often asked why all of this is necessary. The answer is a permanent outdoor cooking facility is different from a temporary food establishment because unlike a temporary food establishment that operates for a few hours to a few days and then is removed from a site, a permanent outdoor cooking facility must be routinely cleaned and maintained. If it is not properly constructed and maintained it will not be easy to clean. An outdoor cooking facility that is not cleaned regularly and is not completely enclosed becomes an attraction and harborage for insects, rodents and pest birds at your facility. It can also pose a fire hazard to the rest of your facility and adjacent facilities/properties.

A guide with the minimum requirements for permanent outdoor cooking facilities is available from the Health Department.

Safe and Effective Pest Control By Kate Fisher



This may be a quick way to deal with pests, but it may not be the right way.

Labels on insect sprays, and other pest control products must be read before application. If the label does not indicate it is for use in a food facility and does not include instructions of how to use it in food handling/processing areas, it cannot be used inside your facility. If you have products that are used for maintaining the outside of the facility such as wasp and hornet spray, ant spray, or weed killer and they are stored inside the facility they must have a label placed on them indicating they are "for outdoor use only". The safest way to store these items is completely separate from cleaning and sanitizing chemicals used inside the facility and in a locked storage area if possible to prevent accidental and unauthorized use in food handling areas.

Another common pest control method is hanging sticky traps to catch flying insects. This method is an acceptable method to reduce the amount of flies and gnats that are in the facility. However, proper placement of these traps is important. They should not be placed anywhere that would contaminate food products, equipment, single service items, or utensils if pests were to fall off the strip. The ideal places for strips to be hung are in areas where they are away from prep areas, cook lines, and dish wash areas. Storage rooms, offices, or break areas are acceptable places to hang traps.

It is every food facility's nightmare when pests are spotted in or around the kitchen. Or worse, when the health department finds them in your facility. The first reaction might be to put up fly strips or pull out a can of RAID™ and start spraying.

Insect control devices that are used to electrocute or stun flying insects (bug zappers) must retain the insect within the device and must be placed in areas where dead insects and insect fragments do not contaminate food, equipment or utensils.

Sticky bait traps are also a valid and common method of monitoring for and catching crawling pests. These types of traps catch insects such as cockroaches and ants. Traps should be covered to keep the glue sticky and checked regularly to ensure that they do not become overloaded. These bait stations should also be placed away from prep areas, cook lines, food products, and utensils.

Poison baits such as rodent bait used for mice and rats must be placed in a covered, secured bait station. Bait blocks and pellets cannot be scattered loose under and behind equipment. This is to prevent the mice and rats from carrying the bait away and spreading poison throughout the facility.

Ensure that pests do not take root in your facility by eliminating harborage where pests can hide, cleaning the facility regularly, and sealing all gaps on doors and windows to eliminate potential pest entry. If pests are a problem in your facility, contact a licensed pest control company. Do-it-yourself pest control products should be used sparingly and a licensed pest control company should handle any heavy-duty pest control. For more information, see sections 441 and 448-450 of the Retail Food Code.

While applying your own pest control may seem like an easy solution to your problem, it is best left to the experienced, licensed professionals with specialized equipment and pesticides.

Reduced Oxygen Packaging and Vacuum Sealing By Brad Bishop

Reduced Oxygen Packaging (ROP) is the reduction of the amount of oxygen in a food package by either removing the oxygen or displacing the oxygen and replacing it with another gas or combination of gases, thus, reducing the oxygen content below the normal 21% found in the atmosphere. ROP can encompass a variety of packaging methods including: canning, vacuum packaging, modified atmosphere packaging, controlled atmosphere packaging, cook chill processing, sous vide, packing in oil, and using a material that is not considered oxygen-permeable. Materials that are not oxygen-permeable will prevent the exchange of oxygen in the packaging, allowing the oxygen present to be consumed by organisms and creating a low oxygen environment.

The main concern with a low oxygen environment is the growth and toxin formation of the bacteria Clostridium botulinum (C. bot), which can result in the illness known as Botulism. Botulism toxin is an extremely potent neurotoxin

that can result in death when consumed. C. Bot is found widely throughout the environment and can make it into our food in a number of ways during harvesting, processing and preparation.

To protect food against C. Bot growth and toxin formation in a reduced oxygen package, the Food Code requires that at least two barriers to bacterial growth must be used. The first barrier is temperature control by storing food at or below 41°F. The second barrier is either the pH or the water activity (moisture level) of the food.

Any food establishment wishing to use reduced oxygen packaging must submit a Hazard Analysis Critical Control Point Plan (HACCP Plan) to the Health Department and it must be approved prior to implementation to ensure a safe product. As a part of the HACCP plan approval process an establishment will be required to submit food samples to a certified laboratory to verify the pH and/or water activity of

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