



Maricopa County

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Standards Committee Meeting - August 19, 2014

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Date: August 19, 2014

**ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH DIVISION
STANDARDS COMMITTEE MEETING**

Time: 1:00 pm - 3:00 pm



Where:
1001 North Central Avenue
3rd Floor Conference Room
Phoenix, AZ 85004

Agenda Items

Topic

Facilitator

Welcome

David Morales

Bandages on Hands

All

Prep Time Allowance

All

Meat Packaging-Multi Packs

All

Time as a Control

All

Use of Over-Glove as a Utensil

All

MEETING MINUTES:

The mission of the Environmental Services Department (Department) Standards Committee is to provide a time for standards to come together and discuss food code and to help our staff members provide consistent documentation of violations, and ensuring that our stakeholders understand the reasoning behind the decisions.

The vision is that all field inspectors and supervisors have a place to go with their questions and know that each item will be discussed with the division as a whole, that feedback (both discussion and code references) will be brought back to each office and inspectors will be consistently giving the same message to operators.

The Department currently has two (2) staff members that have been standardized by the FDA. Those staff members then standardize supervisors in each office who then will standardize their staff.

The procedure is that each Environmental Health Specialist (EHS) field staff notifies their supervisor of any code questions or interpretations that they may have. If supervisors are unable to give an answer or want more clarification, they will then send that information to the training officers and training supervisor. Once received, the question is sent to everyone on the committee so that they can start researching it and discussing it in their office. The question is also added to the agenda for the next Standards Committee meeting.

The members will then meet and use codes, Department policies, and any supporting documentation to come up with a decision collaboratively and by consensus as to how the issue will be addressed by the Division. If the issue cannot be resolved, the committee may seek guidance from the FDA, USDA, ADA, Management team and/or Director if needed.

Topics discussed at this meeting:

Bandages on Hands

Question:

If a finger cot or stall (stall and cot are same thing) protects the lesion, does the employee have to remove the finger cot every time they wash their hands or if it is impermeable are they able to wash over the cot between changing gloves?

Answer:

Yes, they have to change out the finger cot every time they wash their hands (2-201.11(E): Report to manager) and (2-301.14 (F)(H): When to wash hands).

Prep Time Allowance

Question:

Preparation of Cut Lettuce & Tomatoes – how much time allowed? What temperature allowed? 3-501.16 discusses cold holding temperature requirement “except during preparation, cooking, or cooling....”

Scenario:

Operation takes out whole tomatoes or heads of lettuce to clean and chop. The operation leaves out at room temperature the whole unprocessed, the partially processed, and the fully processed products out for various amounts of time.

Answer:

This involves having a detailed conversation with the operator. Based on your discussion if you

determine that it has been less than 4 hours and the product is sitting out unattended or in the walk-in in huge bulk container it could be written as cooling methods (3-501.15).

If it is determined that these products have been out of temperature for longer than 4 hours then a true cooling violation may be written (3-501.14).

Meat Packaging-Multi Packs

Question/Issue:

Another operation has indicated that they would be doing more of these types of packages and will be including raw meat, salsa, tortillas, and/or sour cream.

Hazard:

Cross contamination.

Answer:

Inspectors need to be discussing the cross contamination issues with operators wanting to do these types of packages. Different items should be kept in separate and sealed packages prior to combining into multipacks.

Time as a Control

Question:

Does the operation's written policy have to list every item or can it be blanket statements like "salad bar" or "salsa bar"?

Answer:

A discussion needs to happen with the operator to determine their own understanding of their written policy. Yes it can be a blanket statement of all PHF's on salad bar or salsa bar.

Question:

Can the policy use a set time for every day without having each item marked and or documented when it comes out of temperature control?

Scenario:

Schools set up their salad bars and all foods are thrown out at the end of lunch, 4 hours maximum, or a business's Time as a Control policy states they will discard all items at 12pm, 4pm and 8pm but do not mark any items.

Answer:

3-501.19 (B)(2) states: "The food shall be marked or otherwise identified to indicate the time that is 4 hours past the point in time the food is removed from temperature control." And (B)(4) states that "The food in unmarked containers or packages, or marked to exceed a 4-hour limit shall be discarded."

All entities have to set up a method to show the inspector that they are keeping track of when the item(s) leave temperature control and/or when they are to be discarded. This can be achieved by marking each individual container or log sheet with the necessary information.

Use of Over-Glove as a Utensil

Question/Issue:

Multiple establishments are using "double gloving" without washing hands in between handling raw and then ready to eat foods. This is a process where employees wear the normal, form-fitting foodservice gloves and utilize a larger slip-on over-glove for getting raw animal proteins to cooking surfaces. These employees may be responsible for plating and handling clean wares and ready-to-eat foods after handling the raw food. Has this process been approved for any establishment to use?

Historically, this process has only been seen in larger chain establishments.

Concern:

Hands as a vehicle of cross-contamination.

Answer:

This process would be approved for any establishment. Establishments have implemented this method for handling of raw animal proteins in their foodservice to mitigate the risk of cross-contamination and eliminate the need for employees to change out their gloves and wash their hands. Industry sees the use of over-gloves as a benefit because it offers the user full use and efficiency of their hands. In this situation, the over-glove is being used as a utensil, much like tongs. Using designated utensils and equipment as a means to prevent cross contamination is a suitable method for compliance within the Food Code (3-302.11).

However, as with any utensil being used, an evaluation must be done on how effectively cross-contamination is being prevented. Just as tong handles can get contaminated and in turn contaminate hands. Over-gloves can contaminate the user's already gloved hands when they are removed. The establishment employees should be observed to see if post-use contamination is occurring after using the over-glove. If improper removal and contamination occurs, a hand washing violation should be documented (2-301.14 (P): When to wash).

Other topics

Question:

Can the "double glove" be used for dishwashing as well?

Answer:

No, the "double glove" is only to be used as a "utensil" to prevent cross-contamination of foods. Using it for dishwashing will not be allowed.

Maricopa County Environmental Services Department
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