



# FOOD FOR THOUGHT

SPRING/SUMMER 2025 EDITION

SCAN ME

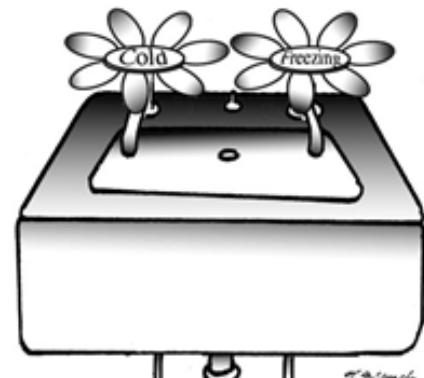


# RESTAURANT HOT WATER REQUIREMENTS: DO YOU MEET THE STANDARD?

## Hot Water: It's More Than a Convenience—It's the Law.

Did you know the use of hot water in food establishments is regulated under the FDA Food Code? This national code influences your state's food safety regulations, and it sets the standard for hot water use in sinks and warewashers.

If you're a restaurant owner, it's your responsibility to ensure your water heater is up to code and fully functional. Here's why hot water isn't optional—it's essential for staying compliant and open for business.



Unable to fix the hot water heater, the maintenance man relabeled the faucets, "Cold" and "Freezing."

## 🔥 WHY HOT WATER MATTERS IN YOUR RESTAURANT

### ✓ 1. Sanitation Is the Law (And Just Good Practice)

Keeping dishes, surfaces, and equipment clean isn't just about appearances. It's about protecting your guests from foodborne illnesses. Bacteria thrive in dirty environments, and hot water is key to killing them effectively.

💡 Pro Tip: The average restaurant uses 2 gallons of hot water per meal served!

### 💡 2. Proper Hand Washing Starts with Warm Water

Your staff's hygiene matters. Training them to wash their hands thoroughly and often with warm water is crucial. Cold water doesn't cut it—and neither does skipping this step.

💡 Staff hygiene directly impacts food safety. Hot water helps enforce high standards.

### 💡 3. Dishwashing Needs Heat

It's not enough for dishes to look clean—they need to be sanitized. That means using:

- High-temp warewashers, or
- Chemical sanitizing machines—both of which depend on correct water temperatures.  
No hot water = no properly sanitized dishes = potential violations.

### 💡 4. Cleaning Equipment and Surfaces

Warm water makes cleaning faster and more effective. Hot water breaks down grease and food residue more easily than cold water, helping you maintain a spotless kitchen.

### 💡 5. Mopping the Floors

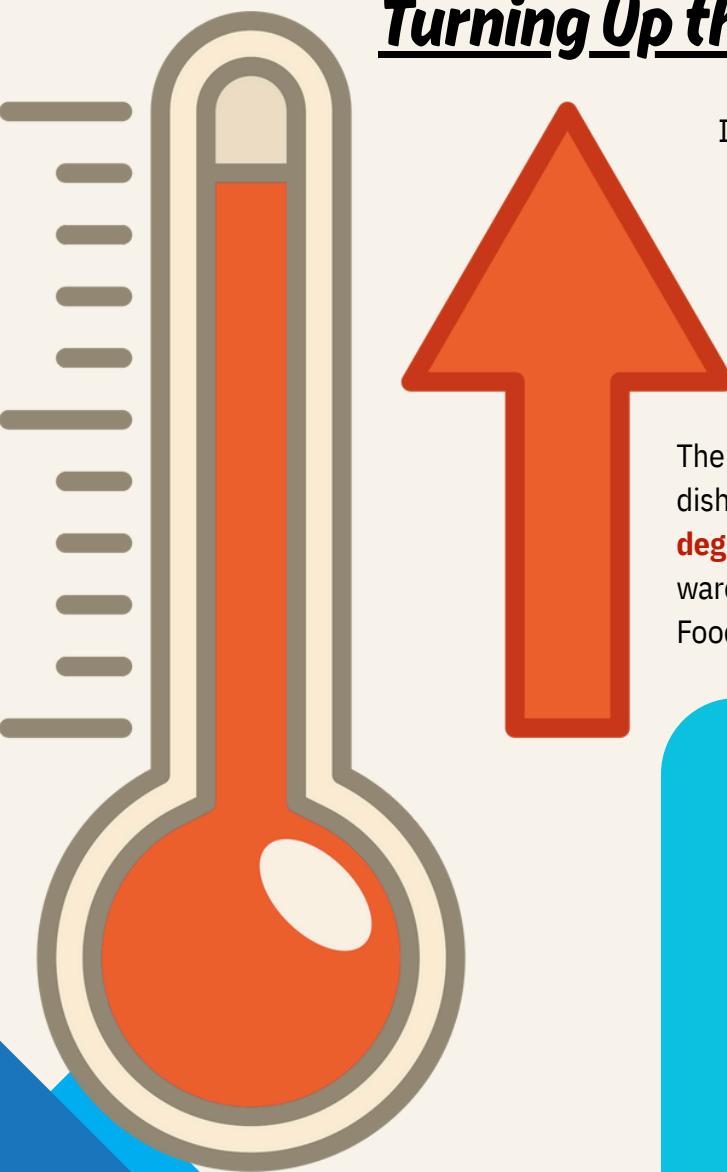
Even your floors need hot water. When it comes to cleaning sticky residues or heavy foot traffic grime, a hot mop bucket beats cold water every time.

#### 💡 STAY COMPLIANT, STAY OPEN

MAKING SURE YOUR WATER HEATER MEETS FDA GUIDELINES ISN'T JUST ABOUT EFFICIENCY—  
IT'S ABOUT KEEPING YOUR DOORS OPEN AND YOUR REPUTATION STRONG.

# MANUAL DISHWASHING TEMPERATURES AT THE THREE COMPARTMENT SINK

## Turning Up the Heat: Sanitizing Dishwashers



In the world of commercial dishwashers, also known as warewasher, restaurants essentially have two options to choose from to pass a health inspection. Your restaurant can use a high-temp warewasher that uses hot water for sanitizing, or you can use a low-temp warewasher, which requires chemicals to get the job done. As with most things, there are [pros and cons of each option](#).

The heat sanitizing option requires that the water run through the dishwasher for **the wash cycle be heated to between 150 and 160 degrees Fahrenheit**, depending on the specific type of high-temp warewasher. Here is the wording from the Food & Drug Administration's Food Code, which most health departments take their guidelines from:

**4-501.110 Mechanical Warewashing Equipment, Wash Solution Temperature.** (A) The temperature of the wash solution in spray type ware washers that use hot water to SANITIZE may not be less than:

- (1) For a stationary rack, single temperature machine, 74° C (165° F)
- (2) For a stationary rack, dual temperature machine, 66° C (150° F)
- (3) For a single tank, conveyor, dual temperature machine, 71° C (160° F)
- (4) For a multitank, conveyor, multi-temperature machine, 66° C (150° F)

Most importantly, there is **the requirement for the rinse cycle**. This cycle is considered the sanitizing cycle, and the water temperature must enter the machine at a blistering **180 degrees Fahrenheit**. Again, the text of the Food Code:



Here's the logic behind the health regulations: Germs, bacteria and other microorganisms won't survive on dishes heated to 160 degrees. Research has shown that heating the rinse water to 180 degrees will produce a dish surface of 160 degrees – hot enough to kill the nasty stuff. However, it's much easier to heat a cold dish up to that 160-degree temperature if those dishes spend a bit of time in a wash cycle heated to 150 or 160 degrees. It's also important that your hot water sanitizing cycle does not exceed 195 degrees, because food particles can actually "bake" into your dishware at temperatures that extreme.



If you choose the hot water sanitizing method, you'll want to **make sure you've got a booster heater installed** as part of your operation in order to **safely** reach hot water temperatures high enough to sanitize. (Your primary water heater's thermostat might go that high, but doing so would cause severe burns when hot water is used for anything else.)



Your warewashing machine should come equipped with a data plate affixed somewhere on the machine that tells you the temperatures reached, as well as the time required for the wash cycle. These requirements are also laid out in the **food code**. Even so, it's recommended that you **test the water in your warewasher periodically** to be certain your equipment is functioning properly. Your state and locality may require documentation on your warewashing equipment temperatures during an inspection, so be sure you know what proof they may ask you to provide.

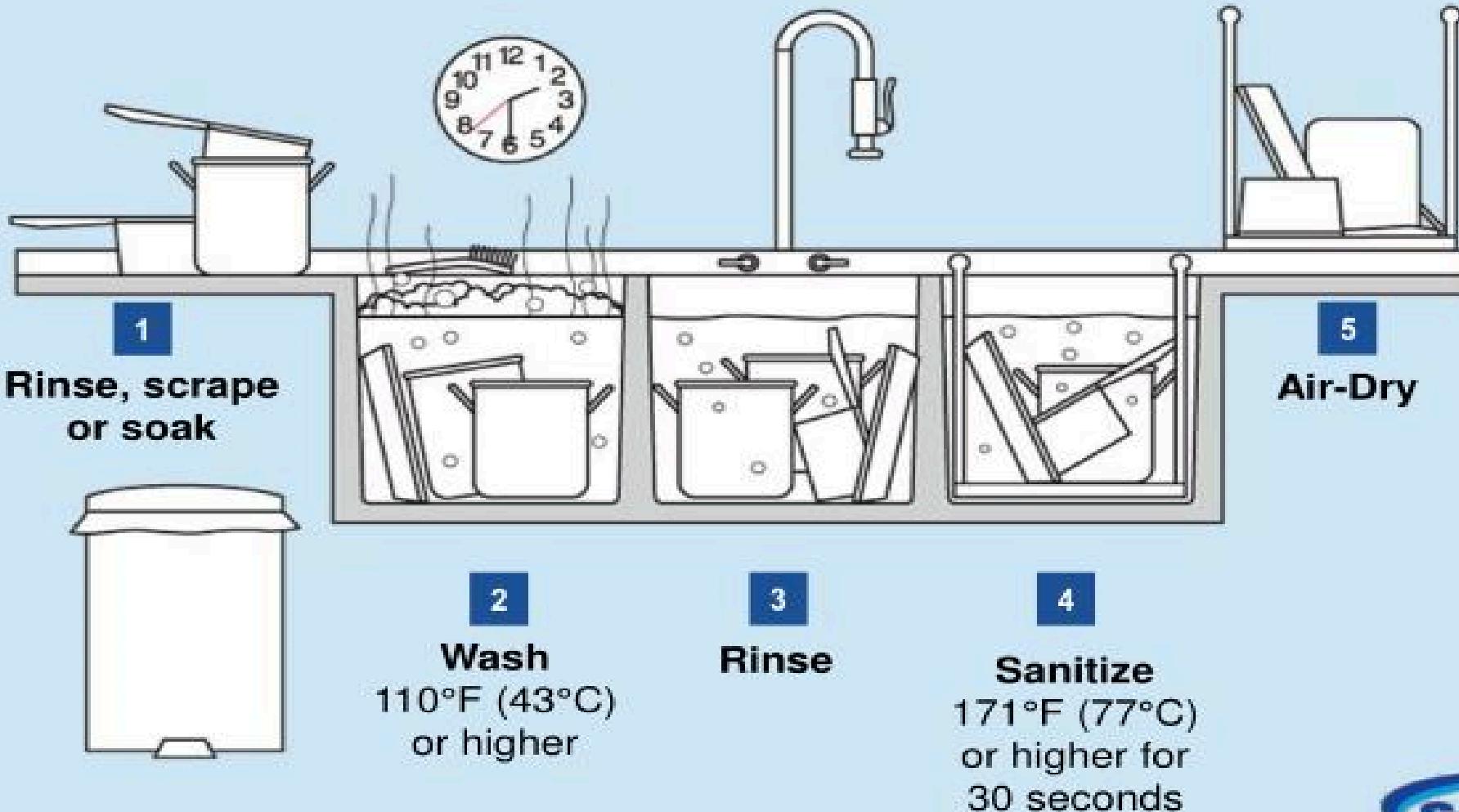
If you go with the **chemical sanitizing option**, the water in your low-temp warewasher must reach a minimum of **120 degrees Fahrenheit**. But you'll have better luck getting grease off those dishes at a temperature closer to 135 degrees Fahrenheit.



# Three-Compartment Sinks

3

## Steps for Cleaning and Sanitizing



# HANDWASHING SINK

The hot water supplied to your handwashing sink **must reach at least 100°F**. The requirement used to be 120°F, but it was lowered to 100°F to minimize injury from hot water scalding.



**Remember, if your restaurant has a bar area you'll need an additional hand sink for the bar, one that is separate from the back of the house.**

As a restaurant owner or manager, you need unlimited access to hot water throughout hours of operation. You also need to make absolutely certain that your water heater can consistently meet your cleaning demands and the temperature requirements set out in Health regulations.

Staying informed about your hot water helps you stay in business!



## WASHING YOUR HANDS IS A MAJOR FACTOR IN PREVENTING FOODBORNE ILLNESS



- Before and after handling food
- after using the bathroom
- after changing a diaper
- after handling pets
- after tending to a sick person
- after blowing your nose, coughing, or sneezing
- after handling uncooked eggs or raw meat, poultry, or fish and their juices

**DID YOU KNOW?**

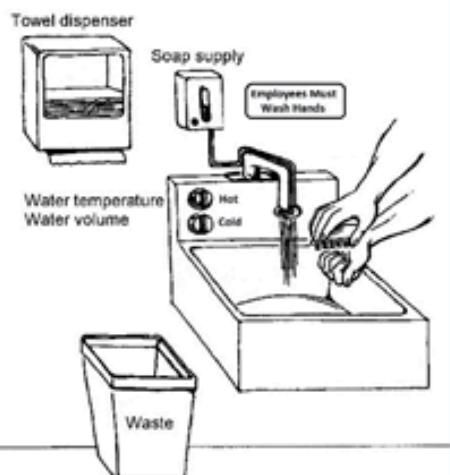
**99%**

**OF PEOPLE DO NOT WASH THEIR HANDS CORRECTLY**



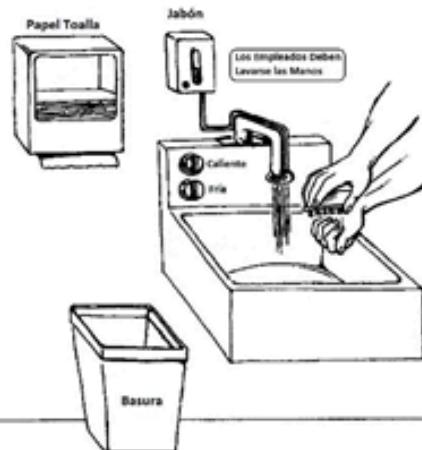
### Handwash Sink Requirements

1. Soap
2. Paper towels
3. Hot & Cold water
4. Garbage Can



### Requerimientos De Lavamanos

1. Jabón
2. Toallas de Papel
3. Agua Caliente y Fría
4. Basura



### 손 세정제 싱크 요구 사항

1. 비누
2. 종이 수건
3. 뜨거운 물과 차가운 물
4. 쓰레기 수

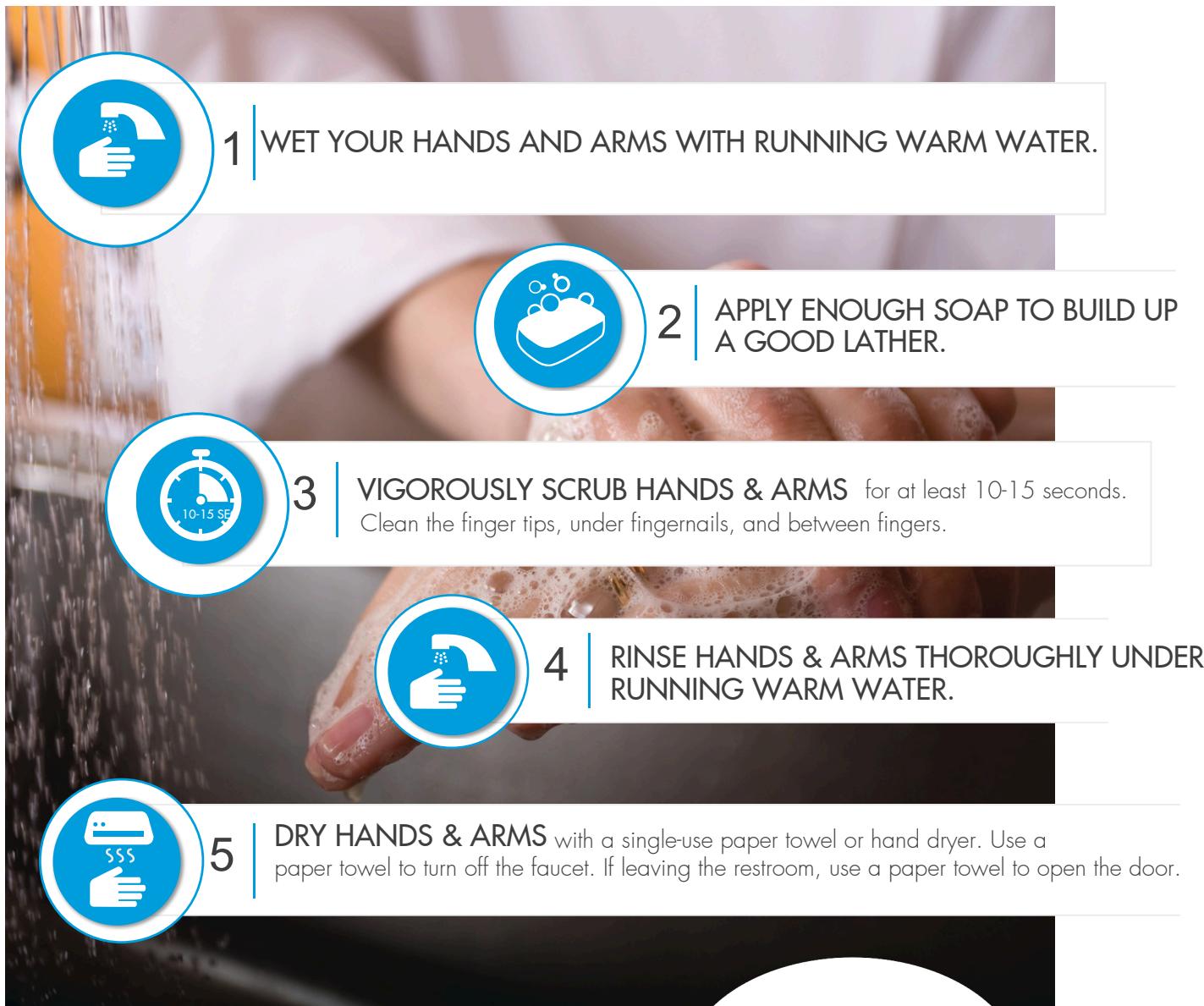


# Hand Washing 101

How can you be sure you're washing your hands regularly enough? You should always wash your hands BEFORE you handle food or begin any food-related task, but it's also very important that you wash your hands AFTER these activities:

- Handling raw meat, poultry and seafood.
- Using the restroom.
- Touching your hair, face, body, clothes or apron.
- Sneezing, coughing or using a tissue.
- Smoking, eating, drinking or chewing gum.
- Using chemicals that might affect the safety of food.
- Handling money and making change
- Emptying or taking out the garbage.
- Clearing tables or washing dirty dishes.

## HAND WASHING HOW TO:



For more information and resources on food safety, visit:

**[foodsafetyfocus.com](https://foodsafetyfocus.com)**

# Get Ready to Grill Safely

## Separate

When shopping, pick up meat, poultry, and seafood last and separate them from other food in your shopping cart and grocery bags.



## Chill

Keep meat, poultry, and seafood refrigerated until ready to grill. When transporting, keep **40°F** or below in an insulated cooler.



## Clean

Wash your hands with soap before and after handling raw meat, poultry, and seafood. Wash work surfaces, utensils, and the grill before and after cooking.



## Cook

Use a food thermometer to ensure meat is cooked hot enough to kill harmful germs. When smoking, keep temperature inside the smoker at **225°F** to **300°F** to keep meat at a safe temperature while it cooks.

<b>145°F</b>	beef, pork, lamb, veal (then let rest 3 minutes before serving)
<b>145°F</b>	fish
<b>160°F</b>	hamburgers and other ground meat
<b>165°F</b>	poultry



## Don't cross-contaminate

Throw out marinades and sauces that have touched raw meat juices. Put cooked meat on a clean plate.



## Refrigerate

Divide leftovers into small portions and place in covered, shallow containers. Put in freezer or fridge within two hours of cooking (one hour if above **90°F** outside).



# Food Establishment Owners/Managers are you interested in having your food handlers achieve food handler certification?

Please contact the Health Department to arrange for a class to be held at either the Health Department or at your food establishment. If you register eight food handlers or more, a free skill demonstration can be provided. Contact Priscilla Lewis, Senior Registered Environmental Health Specialist or Aisha Osmann, PHI, Registered Environmental Health Specialist at 201-568-3450 Ext 510 or 517.

**WE ARE HERE TO ASSIST YOU!**



## HAIR RESTRAINT

Food vendors should wear hats, scarves, visors or hairnets that are designed and worn to effectively keep hair from contacting exposed food.

## TRASH

Trash must be handled in a manner so that it does not create a nuisance or acts as an attractant to pests. The container should be covered when full or not in constant use. Solid waste is to be disposed of properly.

## TOXICS

Cleaning solutions, sanitizers or other toxic items must be stored separately from foods, single-use and service items, and food contact surfaces. These same items need to be properly labeled. Over-the-counter insecticides not rated for use in or around a food establishment should not be used.

## FOOD AND NON-FOOD CONTACT SURFACES

Food preparation and equipment surfaces should be smooth, easily cleanable and durable.

## AUTHORIZED PERSONNEL

Only those individuals working as booth vendors, food handlers, or those who have duties directly related to the operation are allowed in the food booth.

## EATING, DRINKING AND SMOKING

Eating and tobacco use are not allowed in food stands. A closed drink cup with a lid and a straw is allowed.

## ILLNESS RESTRICTIONS

An individual who has any type of wound infection, or who has a communicable illness that could be transmitted through food shall not be allowed to work in the food stand.

## SANITIZER AND WIPING CLOTHS

An approved sanitizer should be provided (chlorine or quaternary ammonium compounds, or iodine). Wiping cloths should be stored in the sanitizer when not in use. When using bleach to sanitize, mix one teaspoon of unscented bleach to each gallon of water.

## WAREWASHING

Warewashing may be done in a three-bin sink or temporary set-up using bus tubs. First, items should be washed in hot, soapy water. Second, they should be rinsed in clean, warm water. Third, they should be chemically sanitized in warm water with an approved sanitizer. Finally, the items should be air-dried.

Temporary Three Compartment Sink



## Reminders:

- Test Strips required to measure the concentration of the sanitizer.
- Water must be changed when dirty and/or every four hours.

## STORAGE

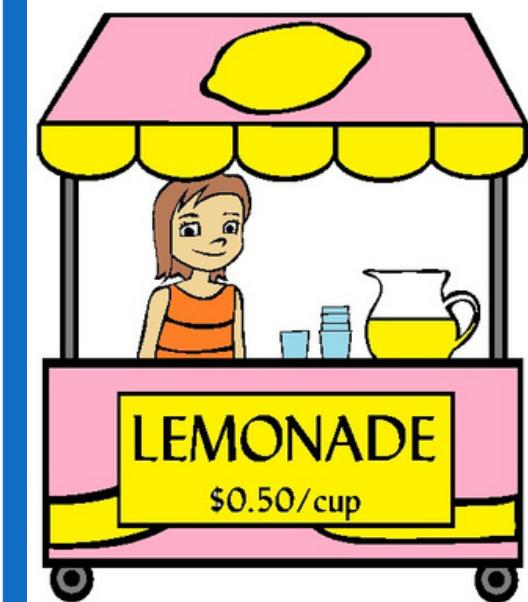
All foods and single-use or service articles, paper plates, cups and lids, should be stored at least six (6) inches above the floor or ground and protected from contamination.

## Works Cited

NJ Department of Health & Senior Services. (n.d.). Retrieved June 16, 2015, from Retail Food Project:  
<http://www.nj.gov/military/vmh-policies/18-02-001A.pdf>

Temporary Food Service Guidelines. (n.d.). Retrieved June 16, 2015, from Missouri Department of Health:  
<http://health.mo.gov/safety/foodsafety/pdf/TempFoodServiceGuide.pdf>

## GUIDELINES FOR TEMPORARY FOOD EVENTS



## Englewood Health Department



73 S. Van Brunt St.  
Englewood NJ, 07631  
Phone: 201-568-3450  
Fax: 201-568-5738

# Temporary Food Service Guidelines

A Temporary retail food establishment means a retail food establishment that operates for a period of no more than 10 consecutive days in conjunction with a single event or celebration.

Fairs, festivals, cookouts or similar celebrations, as well other events sponsored by organizations, serving food and open to the public, are all examples of temporary events.

The Englewood Health Department requires food service operators to apply for a food license 3 days prior to the event.

Food service operators should have a basic understanding on food safety to prevent foodborne illness. By following these guidelines, temporary food service operators can minimize the possibility of a foodborne illness occurrence.

The following actions and equipment are required for all temporary food operations.

## FOOD

- All foods must come from an approved source. All foods and beverages are to be prepared on-site or at a licensed commercial kitchen.
- Home prepared foods can not be sold at a temporary food establishment.
- Prepared foods being transported from a commercial kitchen must arrive to the event hot at 135°F or above or Cold 41°F or below. Foods brought to the event at an improper temperature will not be allowed to be sold. Using a refrigerated truck or insulated containers to keep foods hot and/or cold is required.

## BARE HAND CONTACT

A food employee's bare hands may not touch ready-to-eat-foods. Tongs, spatulas, deli tissues, or gloves must be used.

## HAND SINK

Adequate hand washing facilities consist of a hand sink equipped with hot and cold running water, soap and paper towels. A temporary sink set-up consists of a vessel full of water with a spigot type dispenser, soap, paper towels, a wastebasket and a bucket to collect wastewater. Remember to wash hands: before starting or returning to work, after eating, smoking, or using the restroom, when changing duties, before putting on gloves and whenever hands become soiled. The use of gloves or hand sanitizers is not a substitute for hand washing.



## REMEMBER TO WASH YOUR HANDS PROPERLY.

Use soap and water. Rub your hands vigorously as you wash them.

Wash:

- backs of hands
- wrists
- between fingers
- around and under fingernails

Rinse your hands well. Dry hands with a paper towel. Turn off the water using paper towel instead of your bare hands.

## FOODS STORED IN ICE

- Packaged and unpackaged foods and bottled or canned beverages may not be stored in direct contact with undrained ice or water.
- Ice used for food must be stored in a separate clean cooler. An ice scoop with a handle should be used to scoop ice to prevent bare hand contact with the ice. Ice shall be from a commercial source.
- Raw foods stored in ice must be in a tight sealed container and/or bags.
- Raw foods and ready to eat foods must be stored in different coolers to prevent cross contamination.

## HOT AND COLD HOLDING

Sufficient equipment that is capable of keeping foods hot and/or cold must be provided. Mechanical refrigeration or ice is needed for cold foods. Refrigerators and freezers should be clean and contain thermometers. Coolers must be cleanable and have a drain. Hot holding units must be clean and contain a thermometer. Hot foods are kept at 135 0 F or hotter and cold foods are kept at 41 0 F or colder.



## THERMOMETERS

A Digital metal-stemmed thin probe thermometer is required to check the temperatures of the foods.



## COOKING

An essential part of food safety is assuring that proper final cooking temperatures are met. Proper cooking temperatures for some common foods are:

- Chicken: 165°F
- Hamburgers: 160°F
- Pork: 145°F
- Fish/seafood: 145°F

The carry over or reuse of foods from one day to the next is strongly discouraged.

## CONDIMENTS

It is best to have condiments or other consumer food toppings in individual packets, squeeze bottles or bulk dispensers with plungers.

Food items taken out of its original container and placed in another one must be properly labeled.