



*Food safety program fact sheet:*

## PREVENTION THROUGH HYGIENE

The most important aspect of food handler personal hygiene is **frequent and adequate hand washing**. Fingernails must be clean and closely trimmed. The fingertips are the greatest source of fecal and other disease-causing germs introduced to food. Therefore, hands and fingertips must be scrubbed with soap and warm water for at least 20 seconds. Dry hands on a clean paper towel and do not throw it away - use the paper towel to turn off the water faucet handles and to turn all doorknobs going back to your work station.

Gloves and hand sanitizers do not take the place of adequate and proper hand washing. Gloves are not a substitute for safe food handling practices. If gloves are used, they must be changed after touching raw foods and before working with cooked foods. Cuts and sores on fingers, hands, or arms must be washed clean and bandaged. Bandages on the hands must be covered with foodgrade disposable, plastic gloves that will protect the food. The food handler may need to be moved to non-food and non-utensil assignments until the wounds heal.

Sick employees - those who exhibit coughing, sneezing and runny noses, and especially those who vomit, have diarrhea, or fever - must be excluded from food handling or utensil handling duties.

Having employees hand out fresh clean plates to customers for return trips to the salad/food bar is a good policy that discourages customers from re-using their dirtied plates. Re-using dirty plates can increase the risk of food outbreaks.

## CLEANING, WARE-WASHING & SANITIZING

Food contact surfaces must be cleaned in hot soapy water with adequate agitation and pressure ("elbow grease"), rinsed to remove the alkalinity of the soap, and then sanitized before use. All surfaces coming into contact with food - such as plates, pots, tables, utensils, pans - must be washed, rinsed and sanitized after every use, or after any interruption during which contamination could occur, or at regularly scheduled intervals if they are in constant use.

When preparing a master cleaning schedule, it must be made clear in writing:

- **WHAT** is to be cleaned,
- **WHO** is to clean the thing,
- **WHEN** the thing is to be cleaned, and
- **HOW** the job must be done.

**MANUAL IMMERSION WASHING, ALSO KNOWN AS “THE 3-COMPARTMENT SINK WASH”, INVOLVES THE FOLLOWING STEPS:**

1. Clean and sanitize the sinks and work surfaces before each use.
2. Scrape and pre-soak all utensils.
3. Wash utensils in sink #1 using soap/detergent at a water temperature of 110o F to 120o F.
4. Rinse utensils in sink #2 with clean hot water of 120o F. All food particles and soap film (alkalinity) must be removed from utensil surfaces or the sanitizer in sink #3 will be ineffective.
5. Sanitize utensils in sink #3 by immersing them in a chemical sanitizing solution at a water temperature range of 75oF to 120o F, or in a hot water bath of at least 170o F.
6. Rack utensils and let air dry as part of the sanitizing process.

Use the right sanitizer test kit or test strip to make sure that the concentration of chemical sanitizer in sink #3 is correct. National standards for sanitizers are:

Chlorine.....  $\geq 100$  ppm for 30 seconds

Iodine.....  $\geq 25$  ppm for one (1) minute

Quaternary ammonium..... = 200 - 220 ppm for one (1) minute

Hot water.....  $\geq 171^{\circ}$  F for 30 seconds

Hot water sanitizing by machine: the temperature of the water for the final rinse cycle must be  $\geq 180^{\circ}$  F

Food service chemicals such as pesticides, cleansers, detergents, stainless polish and machine oils should be stored in an area separate from food and utensils, or in a locked cabinet controlled by the manager. If chemicals are transferred to smaller containers for use, each new container must be properly stored and labeled to indicate the contents and its hazards to health. Material Safety Data Sheets (MSDSs) - for each chemical used in the establishment - are required by law to be kept in a file or binder. The MSDS must have the chemical name, physical hazards (it can explode; it can create poison gas if mixed with chemical X; it can catch on fire if near flames, etc.), health hazards (breathing fumes can cause brain damage, etc.), and emergency procedures in case the user is exposed to the chemical.