

Quarterly Scoop

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PHR1 Public Sanitation & Retail Food Safety

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Trending Violations*:

- Handwashing sinks - accessibility
- Holding Temperatures
- Test Strips
- Consumer advisory

*see pages 3-4 for additional info.

Letter from the Editor

By Kassi Anthony

I hope you enjoyed our first newsletter and have been looking forward to the release of this issue. We will have these newsletters archived on our regional website listed above for your convenience soon.

I would like to take the time to recognize the Region 1 team and highlight some notable activities over the last quarter including:

- Presentation at the 40th Annual US Foods: Food & Nutrition Seminar at Texas Tech University (TTU) College of Human Sciences regarding the "Impact of COVID-19 on Health Inspections"
- Morton High School Food Safety Camp
- Presentation at the Panhandle Chapter Texas Environmental Health Association (TEHA) meeting regarding updates to the 2021 Texas Food Establishment Rules (TFER)
- Completion of youth camp season inspections
- Approval/inspection of 66 mobile food units
- Implementation of the Region 1 Summer Internship Program with Texas Tech University
- Averted the possibility of 2 potential outbreak situations with immediate response, action, education, and prevention strategies

As we move forward into the Fall, our focus will be toward routine health inspections for first semester public-school food service requirements. All routine inspections are on-schedule for completion by the end of 2022.

Good to Know!

By Melissa Hardin

What is a TCS Food?

Some foods grow bacteria more easily and quickly than other foods. These foods are known as time/temperature control for safety (TCS) foods because they require certain time and temperature controls to prevent unsafe bacterial growth. These foods are sometimes called potentially hazardous foods (PHFs) because they become hazardous if their bacterial growth is not controlled.

Recognizing TCS foods and knowing how to properly handle them is an important factor of food safety. This article walks through all the basics of TCS foods and how to keep your customers or guests safe. Recognizing TCS foods and knowing how to properly handle them is an important responsibility for both [food managers](#) and [food handlers](#).

Recognizing TCS foods and knowing how to properly handle them is an important factor of food safety and is an important responsibility for both food managers and handlers.

Some foods are more vulnerable to pathogen growth than others. TCS foods are foods that:

- Have high carbohydrate and protein levels
- Are neutral or slightly acidic
- Contain moisture

The most common TCS foods include:

Meat products	Eggs	Fish & shellfish	Dairy
Cream/custard	Cooked vegetables	Potato dishes	Protein-rich plants
Raw sprouts	Cut leafy greens	Cut garlic-in-oil	Sliced melons & tomatoes

Low-risk foods are those that don't have particularly good bacterial growth conditions. These foods are:

- High in acidity
- High in salt or sugar
- Dried

Examples: Low-risk foods include dry goods, breakfast cereals, pickled foods, uncooked rice or pasta, and jams. Although these foods are not common sources of biological contamination, the appropriate care must still be taken when handling them.



Starting a Mobile Food Unit

By Leslie Morgan

1. Always check with the city you will be operating in to ensure you are aware of any local requirements. This license covers areas outside of city/county jurisdictions. See page 4 for Links & Contacts with a link to the interactive jurisdictional map.
2. Please see the [Guidelines for Mobile Food Units- How to Mobilize Your Food Operation](#) (PDF, 2650KB) prior to applying for a permit.
3. Mobile Food Units require a separate permitted and inspected Central Preparation Facility. For information on requesting a variance from this requirement, please review [Variance Request Procedures for Mobile Food Units](#) (PDF, 166KB). To apply for a Variance, please submit all requested information to our [compliance department](#).
 - a. If you have a commissary kitchen, you will need a copy of the permit or last inspection of the facility.
 - b. If a variance is required, you must provide a letter of permission for utilization of a servicing area where you will properly dispose of gray water and fill tanks with potable water. This cannot be a private residence.
4. To apply for a new permit or renew a current permit, please visit the Regulatory Services [online licensing system](#), or complete and return the [Mobile Unit Food Establishment Permit Application](#) (PDF, 114KB).
5. Once step 4 is complete, you will be sent a letter with a file number telling you to contact your inspector for a pre-opening inspection. The inspector may also contact you for this inspection if they have received the file number.
6. Once the pre-opening inspection deems you have met requirements, your license number will be assigned, and your permit mailed to you.



Why...?

By Lindsey Eudey

...Accessible Handwashing

Section 5-205.11(A) of the FDA Food Code states that a handwashing sink shall be maintained so it is always accessible for employee use. So, what does "accessible" mean, and why is that necessary?

Handwashing areas must be kept in a state of readiness. The goal is to

"Human beings do not eat nutrients, they eat food."

- Mary Catherine Bateson

promote handwashing and discourage any prohibited use of the handwashing sink. When the handwashing sink is full of dishes or blocked by boxes, an employee may decide to not wash their hands at all. This is especially possible during rush hours of business. Handwashing is one of the most important things a food-service employee can do to prevent foodborne illness.

In addition, if the handwashing sink is inaccessible, an employee may be encouraged to use food preparation sinks or a mop sink in lieu of the blocked handwashing sink. If so, these non-designated sinks may serve as a source of contamination for hands! Please remember to

Links & Contacts

[Region 1 - Retail Foods Contact Info](#)

[Texas Interactive Jurisdictional Map](#)

[Retail Food Establishments - Home](#)

[Starting a New Retail Food Establishment in Texas](#)

[Certified Food Manager Training Programs](#)

[Cottage Food Production Operations](#)

[Youth Camp Program - Home](#)

[Public Swimming Pools and Spas - Home](#)

keep your handwashing sink stocked with soap and paper towels to keep your sink readily accessible.

[Handwashing Sign \(English version\)](#)

[Handwashing Sign \(Spanish version\)](#)

[Employee Reporting Sign](#) (required at all handwashing sinks)

Requirement Reference

By *Mayra Vargas*

1. Hot/Cold holding – [FDA Food Code 2017](#) 3-501.16
2. Test strips – [FDA Food Code 2017](#) 4-302.14
3. Consumer Advisory – [FDA Food Code 2017](#) 3-603.11



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