



Food Service Checklist

COOKING AREA

Cooking activities generate odors, moisture, food waste, and other trash, all of which must be managed carefully to avoid indoor air quality (IAQ) problems. Food odors can be a distraction to students and staff if they circulate through the school.

Confirm that local exhaust fans function properly

- Check for airflow when fans are on. (Hold a piece of tissue paper near the fan to see whether it is pulled toward the fan)
- Check for cooking odors or smoke in areas adjacent to the cooking, preparation, and eating areas
- Make sure fan is not excessively noisy (excessive noise may indicate a problem or may cause the fan to not be used)

◇ Fans function; no odors or smoke in adjacent areas

○ Need help, local exhaust fan does not appear to function properly

Use exhaust fans whenever cooking, dishwashing, and cleaning.

- Make sure staff understand the importance of using the fans to prevent moisture accumulation and the spread of food odors
- Train staff to use fans when cooking, dishwashing, or cleaning

- Monitor use of fans from time to time throughout the year

◇ Fans are used as appropriate

○ Need help to confirm whether fans are used appropriately

Confirm that gas appliances function properly

- Verify that gas appliances are vented outdoors
- Check for combustion gas odors, headaches when gas appliances are in use, or natural gas odors at any time
- All gas appliances vented as appropriate

◇ No leaks or exhaust odors

○ Need help checking for (or have detected problems with) leaks, odors, backdrafting, venting to outdoors

Clean kitchen after use

- Inspect kitchen for signs of micro-biological growth (check for moldy odors, slime, algae)
- Check hard-to-reach places such as the upper walls and ceiling for evidence of mold growth
- Clean affected areas as needed

This checklist discusses four major topic areas:

Cooking Area

Food Handling and Storage

Waste Management

Receiving

These activities also apply to home economics instructional areas.

Instructions:

1. Read the *IAQ Background*.
2. Read each item on this Checklist.
3. Check the diamond(s) as appropriate or check the circle if you need additional help with an activity
4. Return this checklist to the IAQ Coordinator and keep a copy for future reference.

Name:

Room or Area:

School:

Date Completed:

Signature:

- If biocides are used, select only products registered by EPA for such use, follow the manufacturer's directions for use, and pay careful attention to the method of application

◇ **No signs of microbiological growth**

○ **Need help checking for mold or cleaning**

Inspect kitchen for plumbing leaks

- Check sink faucets and area under sinks
- Look for stains or discoloration, and/or damp or wet areas

◇ **No plumbing leaks**

○ **Found leaks, need help to fix leaks**

FOOD HANDLING AND STORAGE

A clean kitchen with food stored in secure containers discourages vermin. Integrated Pest Management (IPM) practices minimize the need for pesticides and discourage pests by eliminating the food sources, pathways, and shelter they need. The IAQ Coordinator can help you and your staff learn more about IPM.

Check food preparation, cooking, and storage areas regularly for signs of insects and vermin

- Look for dead insects or rodents
- Look for vermin feces
- Notify IAQ Coordinator if insects or vermin infestation is discovered

◇ **No signs of insects or vermin**

○ **Need help, found signs of insects or vermin**

Confirm that appropriate food preparation, cooking, and storage practices are implemented

- Review food handling and storage practices. Containers should be well-sealed, with no traces of food left on outside surfaces of containers

Maintain general cleanliness

- Dispose of food scraps properly and remove crumbs
- Wipe counters clean with soap and water or a disinfectant, according to school policy
- Sweep and wet mop floors to remove food
- Clean stoves and ovens after use

◇ **Food service area is clean**

○ **Need help cleaning food service area**

WASTE MANAGEMENT

Food wastes and food-contaminated paper products produce odors and encourage insects and vermin. Proper placement of dumpsters prevents odors from entering the building and minimizes opportunities for insects and vermin to enter the building.





Place waste in appropriate containers

- Containers should have lids that close securely
- If possible, separate food waste and food-contaminated items from other wastes

◇ **Waste is stored in appropriate containers**

○ **Need appropriate containers**

Locate dumpsters well away from air intake vents, operable windows, and food service doors

◇ **Dumpster(s) properly located**

○ **Need help determining proper dumpster placement, or moving dumpster(s)**

RECEIVING

The kitchen is often the busiest part of the school for deliveries. Because fans are exhausting air from the kitchen (i.e., the kitchen is negatively pressurized), air from an adjacent loading dock may be drawn into the kitchen. If delivery trucks or other vehicles idle at the dock, exhaust fumes can be drawn in and cause problems.

Remind vendors not to idle their engines

- Post a sign prohibiting vehicles from idling their engines in receiving area

- Ask drivers to turn off their engines if they don't follow instructions on the sign

◇ **Vendors turn off engines in receiving area**

○ **Need help, vendors do not turn off engines**

Keep doors or air barriers closed between receiving area and kitchen

- Door(s) regularly closed

○ **Need help keeping door(s) closed**

NO PROBLEMS TO REPORT. I have completed all activities on this Checklist, and I do not need help in any areas.