

Austin/Travis County Health and Human Services Department

Health Wise Quarterly

Brought to you by the friendly staff at your

Environmental Health Services Division

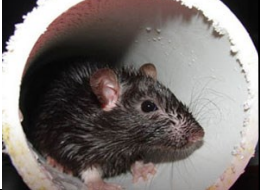
TRAINING

Environmental Health Services Division (EHSD) offers monthly Food Safety Presentations from 3:00PM - 4:30PM. Trainings are held at Rutherford Lane Campus [1520 Rutherford Lane, Building 1, Suite 200](#). Interested in attending? Register by phone 512-978-0300 or via email: EHSD.service@austintexas.gov

January 19, 2016	Requirements for Starting a Food Enterprise and the Inspection Process
February 16, 2016	Requirements and Processes for Submitting a Hazard Analysis Critical Control Point (HACCP)
March 15, 2016	Temporary Events and Mobile Vendor Inspections

WINTER IS COMING!!

Are you ready for winter? It is getting colder outside – rodents may enter a business for food and shelter! Seal up holes or gaps, trap any existing rodents, and clean up any sources of food or water and items that might provide shelter for them. Mice can squeeze through a hole the size of a nickel, and rats can squeeze through a hole the size of a quarter. Worldwide, rats and mice are the cause of over 35 diseases! [What to do about Rodents!](#)





- .. The new [Texas Food Establishment Rules \(TFER\)](#) has been approved for use in both the City of Austin and Travis County. Environmental Health Officers will be utilizing the new TFER for inspections.
- .. New Policy Update Notice: [Central Preparation Facilities \(CPF\)](#)
- .. Effective 01/01/2016: Mobile Unit Hours Change to 7:45AM -11:00AM on Tuesdays and Thursdays.
- .. Effective 01/01/2016: Central Preparation Facility operators will be required to register with the health authority. [See Article in the Austin American Statesman.](#)
- .. Effective 01/01/2016: Mobile Vending Unit operators will be required to have a registered Food Manger and Food Handler certifications for all employees that handle food.
- .. Effective 04/01/2016: Mobile Vending Unit operators will be required to use a CPF registered with the health authority in order to obtain permit approval.



Bare Hand Contact with Ready-to-Eat Food

This is a highlight of ONE significant change in the TFER. This is not a complete summary of changes or a replacement for reading the TFER. This change impacts a number of food establishments and action needs to be taken by food establishments that use bare hand contact with ready-to-eat food. Bare hand contact with ready-to-eat food must now be approved by your regulatory authority in advance of your inspection or you could be out of compliance.

Straight from the TFER §228.65 Preventing Contamination by Employees (Starting on Page 49):
“...(5) Food employees not serving a highly susceptible population may contact exposed, ready-to-eat food with their bare hands if:
(A) the permit holder has obtained approval from the regulatory authority and maintains proof of the approval at the facility for review during inspection. P [15]
(B) written procedures are maintained in the food establishment and made available to the regulatory authority upon request that include for each bare hand contact procedure, a listing of the specific ready-to-eat foods and food additives that are touched by bare hands, P [15] ...”

The Texas Department of State Health Services developed a sample document as a tool for food establishments that decided to continue to have bare hand contact with ready to eat foods. If your food establishment needs a copy of this tool or more information about getting your written procedures approved by EHSD, let us know. See contact us section below.



TOP THREE FOOD ESTABLISHMENT INSPECTION VIOLATIONS

For the City of Austin Fiscal Year (October 1, 2014 - September 30, 2015), these are the most frequent violations noted out of 10,298 total food establishment inspections completed by your Environmental Health Officers.

#1 FOOD CONTACT SURFACES (44.1%): Equipment and utensils not being properly cleaned and/or stored with food particles still attached. A food contact surface is any surface in which food or utensils may come into physical contact. This can include table counters, walk-in cooler storage racks, knife racks, and inside walls of an ice machine; just to mention a few. It is always a good idea to have all food surfaces listed on your daily cleaning schedule to ensure proper sanitation and storage.

#2 HYGIENE (23.6%): Actions taken by employees while in the food preparation area or while preparing food. For example, this violation will be marked for an employee who is eating, drinking or using tobacco in the food preparation or storage areas. This violation also covers basic kitchen procedures that should be followed, such as a hand sink’s purpose. The hand sink in any establishment may not be used for anything other than washing ones hands. Often times it is found that this sink is used as a dump sink, a water source, or storage sink for dirty utensils; using a hand sink for this type of activity only makes the sink dirty making it impossible to obtain properly cleaned hands. The best way to avoid this violation is proper and continuous training of all food service employees. While every Food Handler is required to complete a Food Handler’s course that does cover these items, it is always good to reinforce training on a regular basis.

#3 COLD HOLD (23.0%): Food should be kept at 41°F at all times, and rapidly cooled to 41°F for items that were out during active food preparation. In order to ensure all food is kept at proper temperatures, it is critical that actual temperatures of foods in all refrigeration be checked daily. This can simply be a spot check of one or two items in each cooler to ensure that the unit is holding all foods properly. Overcrowding of refrigeration can also affect the temperature of the food kept inside. During the daily check, one should also examine how the refrigerator is being stocked to avoid the overcrowding issue.

Come in WE'RE OPEN

ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH SERVICES DIVISION CUSTOMER WALK IN HOURS

Rutherford Lane Campus 1520 Rutherford Lane 7:45AM - 3:30PM Monday - Friday
One-Stop Shop 505 Barton Springs Road 8:00AM -12:00PM Monday - Friday

austin 3.1.1SM

EHSD is now partnering with Austin 3-1-1 to handle all citizen complaints and environmental investigations. To request services, get general assistance or submit a citizen complaint, dial 3-1-1 or 512-974-2000 if you are calling from outside the Austin service area.

If you feel an inspection issue or complaint investigation has not been satisfactorily addressed, or to speak with a manager regarding administrative issues, please call us directly at 512-978-0300 between the hours of 7:45AM - 4:45PM Monday - Friday.

Mailing Address: EHSD Post Office Box 142529, Austin, TX 78714

Email Address: EHSD.service@austintexas.gov

Web Address: <http://www.austintexas.gov/departments/food-establishment-requirements>

Feedback: Please complete our online survey to help us better serve our customers: www.surveymonkey.com/s/EHSDSurvey

Contact Us

January - March 2016