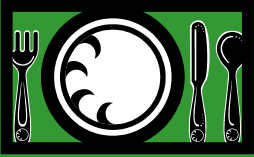


Spring, 2006



A Newsletter For and About the Food Service Industry

# The Back Burner News

## Genesee County Health Department

630 S. Saginaw Street, Flint, Michigan 48502 Tel: (810) 257-3603 Web: [www.gchd.us](http://www.gchd.us)  
Robert M. Pestronk, MPH, Health Officer  
Gary K. Johnson, MD, MPH, Medical Director  
James R. Helmstetter, RS, MPA, Environmental Health Services Director



### We Want To Know What You Think!

This January, the Genesee County Health Department sent 450 customer satisfaction surveys to randomly selected food service establishments in Genesee County. You may have received one.

The word “customer” in the survey refers to YOU, the food service operator. You are indeed OUR customer. You support our program with your license fees and your county and state taxes. Your operations undergo our inspection. You come to us for food safety and sanitation information.

It is important for us to know what our customers think of the service we provide. The responses to our survey will show us what we are doing well and where we need to improve.

All programs at the health department are expected to survey their customers every few years. The last survey in the food service sanitation program was conducted in 2001. Respondents to that survey rated the professionalism of our staff and our overall program highly. We also received several helpful suggestions for improvement. We then went to work to change our program in the ways you suggested.

One of the changes we made was to make you more aware of the ways you could reduce your license fee. We did this by including a license fee reduction application with your license renewal application the last three years. This year, we sent the reduction application to you in a special mailing in January.

At your suggestion, we created a lending library of food safety videos and redesigned our newsletter.

Another change was to make you more aware of the Genesee County Food Advisory Board that represents your interests in meetings with health department staff. We did this by giving the advisory board space for their own column in our Back Burner Newsletter, and added information about the advisory board to our website.

We also beefed up our website to include information about the classes we teach as well as downloadable copies of our license, plan review, and variance applications.

By the time this newsletter goes to print, we will have received a summary of responses to this year’s survey. We look forward to doing what we can to improve the service we provide to you. To those of you who took the time to respond to the survey, THANK-YOU.

*Ward Lindsay*, Food Program Supervisor

### Food Service Awards Program

The 11<sup>th</sup> Annual GCHD Food Service Awards Reception will take place on April 6, 2006 at 1:30 p.m. at the Genesee County Health Department. Awards will be presented in the following four categories:

*Excellence in Sanitation*

*HACCP Recognition*

*Healthy Lifestyle (Nutrition)*

*Smoke-free Dining Recognition*

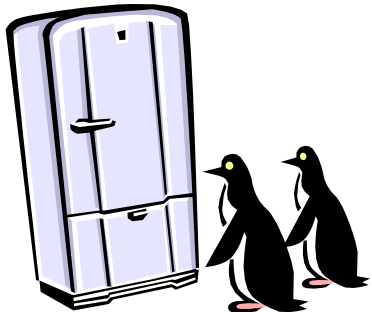


See the enclosed announcements for a complete list of

Excellence in Sanitation Award recipients—and—HACCP Recognition recipients.

## Cooling Bulk Foods Safely

The Norovirus outbreak in mid Michigan (see the article on Page 3) shows the importance of a healthy staff, clean hands, and proper sanitation. But that is only the starting point. Your procedures must also protect food from harmful bacteria that can make your customers sick.



One procedure that stops bacteria from causing harm is the proper cooling of foods cooked in bulk. Sausage gravy, egg rolls, ribs, meat sauce, rice, soup, and refried beans, are just a few of the foods commonly cooked in large quantities to last several days. Rapid cooling of these foods after

they are cooked robs bacteria of the temperature and time they need to multiply.

How rapid must the cooling be? The Food Code requires the temperature of the food to drop from 140°F to 70°F within 2 hours and from 70°F to 41°F within 4 hours. That is a total of 6 hours from a safe hot temperature to a safe cold temperature. If that sounds like plenty of time, it is not. Even when refrigerated, thick or dense foods improperly cooled in deep stock pots can take days to cool!

Use your probe thermometer and a clock to see if your foods cool as fast as the Food Code requires. Try one or more of these methods to speed the cooling process:

- Pan the food out in depths of 2 inches or less and place in the refrigerator
- Use an ice bath
- Use an ice paddle
- Add ice as a final ingredient
- Use a blast chiller.



While it cools, always keep food UNcovered and stir it frequently to release even more heat. You can cool foods safely. Your customers are counting on it!

### Remember the 2-Stage Cooling Method:

**140°F to 70°F in 2 hours, and then  
70°F to 41°F in the next 4 hours**

IF the food your are cooling does not reach either temperature (70°F at the 2 hour mark or 41°F after the 6 hour mark), the food must be immediately reheated to 165°F for 15 seconds or discarded.

## A Message from the Board

The Genesee County Food Service Advisory Board (FSAB) has broadened its relationship with the GASC Technology Center. Thanks to the success of our annual golf outing fundraiser, we are providing a scholarship.

The FSAB will award one scholarship this year to a senior in the hospitality and food service platform, who is accepted into a college level culinary arts program. This year's scholarship value is \$1,700. The value was figured as a percentage of the proceeds from the golf outing.

This year, as in the past, we contributed to the Salvation Army Coats for Kids program. We presented that charity with a check for \$11,800 (543 coats). Please remember that all of us can contribute to these good causes by taking part in the golf outing. If you would like to help make this year's outing a success, please call me.

Our main purpose as a board is still to work with the health department on issues of concern to food service operators. Meetings are held at the GASC Technology Center. Upcoming meeting dates are: **May 9<sup>th</sup> at 2:30 p.m.** and **September 12<sup>th</sup> at 2:30 p.m.** Meeting dates are subject to change, so if you are not on the FSAB mailing list, check with me before making the trip.

We always welcome new members!

*Penny Drolet*, FSAB Chairperson  
Venus Family Restaurant (810) 235-6911

### Training Opportunities

#### *Certified Food Service Management Training Course*

The next course is scheduled for:

April 11- May 23, 2006

See the registration form with this issue.

Don't delay – seating is limited!

#### *2006 Food Worker's Classes*

Join us in our 15<sup>th</sup> year of offering the monthly Food Worker's Classes. The class schedule is as follows:

April 20	2:00 p.m. – 4:00 p.m.
May 18	9:00 a.m. – 11:00 a.m.
June 16	2:00 p.m. – 4:00 p.m.
July 20	9:00 a.m. – 11:00 a.m.
August 17	2:00 p.m. – 4:00 p.m.
September 21	9:00 a.m. – 11:00 a.m.
October 19	9:00 a.m. – 11:00 a.m.
November 9	9:00 a.m. – 11:00 a.m.
December 7	9:00 a.m. – 11:00 a.m.



Registration Cost: \$11.00 per participant.  
Pre-registration required. Call (810) 257-3603.

## Do The Math: Norovirus + Sick Employees + Vomit = Three Important Lessons

In January of 2006, Michigan experienced its largest outbreak of Norovirus ever. Nearly 500 patrons of a restaurant in mid Michigan became sick from the food they ordered. The frightening thing is that what happened there can happen anywhere. As a food service operator, it is in your interest to understand what went wrong at this restaurant. Learning three important lessons from this tragic case can help you avoid a similar outbreak in your establishment.



**The first lesson is not to allow sick employees to work.** Employees with one or more of these symptoms shall be restricted from the kitchen: nausea, vomiting, diarrhea, fever, or jaundice. Employees must be trained to report to the person-in-charge when they are sick. At the mid Michigan restaurant, at least four employees suffering from diarrhea and vomiting were working and handling food in the two days leading up to the outbreak. One of them vomited in the kitchen itself and continued working.

**The second lesson is that when Norovirus particles are present in vomit, they can aerosolize and spread up to 40 feet, covering everything in their path!** The very act of cleaning up the vomit and disposing it causes even more of the virus particles to become airborne and to spread. It is not enough to clean and sanitize the area where the vomit landed, which is what staff at the mid Michigan restaurant did. One must also clean and disinfect all surfaces in the kitchen and discard all exposed food or ice in the area, as well as any food handled by the ill employee.



**The third lesson is that Noroviruses are killed only after the surfaces they are on are scrubbed with hot, soapy water, rinsed, and disinfected with a very strong chlorine bleach solution of at least 1,000 parts per million (ppm).** That is 20 times stronger than the 50 ppm chlorine solution

normally used to sanitize dishes! Noroviruses are not killed by quaternary ammonia (quat) based sanitizers. That was the kind of sanitizer used to sanitize the area exposed to the vomit at the mid Michigan restaurant. Unfortunately for them, no matter how much they tried to disinfect the area with the quat sanitizer, it wasn't enough. Quat sanitizers do not kill Noroviruses!

Norovirus is the leading cause of foodborne illness in the United States, with more than 9,000,000 cases each year. It is rarely fatal, but it is awful to have.

Symptoms of vomiting, mild fever, and severe watery diarrhea typically develop about 30 hours after exposure to the virus and last 1 to 2 days. It is usually spread by hands that are contaminated with feces or vomit, either directly from person to person, or indirectly from person to food to person.

**While proper hand washing is essential in controlling this disease, it is even more important to prevent sick employees from working in the first place. Don't let your patrons, staff, and business become victims of Norovirus.**

*Stay Home*



Take these lessons to heart!



**Say Good-bye to 45°F**

Did you know that after May 2006, all refrigeration equipment in Michigan food service establishments must be able to maintain potentially hazardous food at 41°F or below?

Section 3-501.16 (2) of the 1999 FDA Food Code states:

*“Within 5 years of the regulatory authority’s adoption of this Code, (refrigeration) equipment (shall be) upgraded or replaced to maintain food at a temperature of 5°C (41°F) or less.”*

The Michigan Food Law, which became effective in November 2000, is our regulatory authority. When it was adopted, the legislature granted an additional six (6) months to comply with the requirement. Thus, May 2006 became the deadline to replace refrigeration equipment incapable of storing foods at or below 41°F.

Failure to meet the 41°F standard is a critical violation!

**If you have any questions regarding this regulation, please contact your Area Sanitarian.**



## Hats Off

Congratulations to the following individuals who recently became Certified Food Service Managers by successfully completing coursework and earning a certificate from the Education

Foundation of the National Restaurant Association or who successfully renewed their certification:

*Karen Adams	New Passages
Shirley Baldwin	Shirley's Café and Grill
Kim Ball	Goodrich Country Club
Rosalind Bullock	Kentucky Fried Chicken
*Melanie French	Maryville Center
Steve Fuller	Holiday Inn Gateway Center
Kim Gow	Holiday Inn Gateway Center
*Joe Haddad	Ya Ya's Flame Broiled Chicken
Cathy Hayostek	Torch Bar and Grill
*Ken Huber	Ya Ya's Flame Broiled Chicken
*Linda Jamra	Ya Ya's Flame Broiled Chicken
*Ed Kmiecik	Ya Ya's Flame Broiled Chicken
Maria LaBrecque	IMA Brookwood
Derrick Ocenasek	Bubba's Roadside Inn
Audra Parmer	Redwood Lodge
Kim Polomski	Springfield Township Parks
Lisa Ray	IMA Brookwood
Victor Robertson	Halo Burger
Gizela Schwartz	Fandangles'
Baha Shihabi	Holiday Inn Gateway Center
Stefon Short	Epicurean Grill
Javan Tijerina	Helena's El Charrito's
Tiffany Tijerina	Helena's El Charrito's
Duan Yang	New Century Buffet
Qian Yang	New Century Buffet

\* Renewal of certification

## Working Together With You for Food Safety

### GCHD Food Staff

#### *Food Program Supervisor*

Ward Lindsay, R.S. (810) 257-3603

#### *Environmental Health Coordinator & Backburner News Editor*

Janet Phelps, R.S. (810) 257-3199

#### *Food Program Secretary*

Dennis Goodman (810) 341-7659

#### *Plan Review & New Licenses*

#### *West side of Flint/Genesee County*

Robert Losee, R.S. (810) 237-6164

#### *Plan Review & New Licenses*

#### *East side of Flint/Genesee County*

Roderick McNeill (810) 257-3827

#### *HACCP Trainer and Swartz Creek, Clayton, Gaines and Argentine Townships*

Kelli Pleasant (810) 257-3192

#### *Flint Township (M-Z) & Mundy Township*

Tina Moore (810) 257-3130

#### *Flushing & Vienna Townships*

Bill Hough (810) 257-3597

#### *Flint Township (A-L) & Richfield Township*

Jeff Kost (810) 257-3847

#### *Mt. Morris & Montrose Townships*

Dawn Pickard, R.S. (810) 257-3601

#### *Atlas & Davison Townships*

Pete McKenna (810) 257-3823

#### *Burton*

Kevin Hoxsey, RS (810) 257-3152

#### *Grand Blanc Township*

Cheryl Green (810) 257-3848

#### *Fenton Township*

Cathy Roeper (810) 257-3587

#### *Forest, Genesee, & Thetford Townships*

Heather Havard (810) 257-3129

*If your operation is in the city of Flint,  
contact our office for your Area Sanitarian.*

## HACCP Corner



The Genesee County Health Department is the ONLY local health department in the state of Michigan that offers a license credit for a food service establishment having a valid HACCP plan (risk-based food safety plan) in place.

Last year 36 food service establishments took advantage of this license credit, which was half of the license fee.

**Wouldn't you like half of your license fee waived??!**

**Contact Kelli Pleasant at (810) 257-3192 to learn more  
about starting your own HACCP program.**