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Our fourth *Food Matters* newsletter addresses three common violations found during inspections. We trust that after reading this issue you will be able to avoid these violations. For more information, please use the directory on page 4. We will be happy to hear your suggestions for topics in future issues of *Food Matters*. Call the Health Academy at (212) 280 9211 with your suggestions.

COMMON VIOLATIONS

**Violation: Ventilation system not provided, improperly installed or in disrepair.**

*Hot Water Heaters*

An abundant supply of hot water is a necessity in a food service establishment. This is usually produced by one of two types of hot water heaters in common use. One is powered by electricity and the other by natural gas. The gas-fired heater, while cheaper to operate, poses a greater risk because the combustion of natural gas produces carbon monoxide. This carbon monoxide is extremely dangerous. It is an odorless, tasteless and colorless gas which readily combines with the red cells in our blood and prevents oxygen from reaching the heart, brain and muscles.

This lack of oxygen can lead to weakness, loss of consciousness and death.

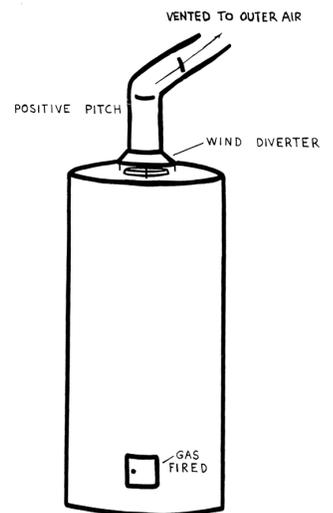
Hot water heaters, like all gas-fired equipment must be connected to the outside by way of vent or flue pipes. These pipes carry the carbon monoxide to the outer air where it is diluted and no longer poses a problem. An effective vent pipe must have no holes or rust, be rigid and set at an upward angle to the outside. This upward angle, also referred to as positive pitch, is important since hot air rises naturally and must be channeled upwards.

Another problem associated with gas-fired hot water heaters is the presence of a "back draft".

Since these heaters are con-

nected to the outside, there is always the possibility that a strong gust of wind from the outside may pass through the vent pipe and extinguish the pilot light. With the pilot extinguished, natural gas can accumulate and create potential for a fire. A back draft can be detected by holding a piece of thin toilet tissue next to the wind diverter built into the vent pipe. If the tissue blows away from the wind diverter, then there is a problem with back draft.

A water heater should be installed by a licensed plumber and checked regularly to ensure that there is no back draft and that the vent pipes are in good condition.



## COMMON VIOLATIONS (CONTINUED)

### Violation: Eggs found dirty, cracked; liquid or powdered eggs not pasteurized.

#### Eggs

As long as they are handled properly, eggs are among the most nutritious foods on earth and one of the safest sources of animal protein. Eggs are a potentially hazardous food. All potentially hazardous foods, including eggs, support the growth of infectious microorganisms and therefore, must be handled carefully.

The bacteria *Salmonella enteritidis* is frequently associated with raw or undercooked eggs and foods containing raw eggs.

The following guidelines can help to reduce the incidence of foodborne illnesses from eggs.

#### Purchase:

- ◆ Purchase from reputable suppliers who deliver

eggs in refrigerated trucks.

- ◆ Purchase quantities needed for no more than two weeks at a time.

#### Storage:

- ◆ Refrigerate immediately on receipt at or below 45 °F.

- ◆ Practice a "First in, First out" policy of rotating egg stock.

#### Preparation:

- ◆ Use only clean eggs without cracks.

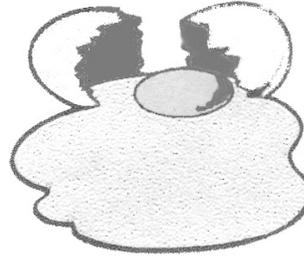
- ◆ Liquid and powdered eggs must be pasteurized.

- ◆ Utensils used to scramble eggs at a grill should be washed, rinsed and sanitized every 30 minutes.

- ◆ Hold at room temperatures only enough eggs that can be used within an hour.

#### Cooking:

- ◆ Cook eggs thoroughly to 145°F or until firm throughout. However, an



individual customer may request and be sold eggs prepared at fewer than 145°F.

- ◆ Hold cold egg dishes at below 41°F.

- ◆ Hold hot egg dishes at above 140°F.

- ◆ Use liquid, pasteurized eggs in preparing foods that are served without cooking or are lightly cooked. Examples of these are Caesar salad dressing, Hollandaise and other sauces, eggnog, ice cream and egg-fortified beverages.

#### Service:

- ◆ Serve foods made with eggs immediately after cooking or cool them rapidly for later serving.

### Violation: Resuscitation equipment not provided; sign about equipment not posted.

#### Local Law 12, Resuscitation Equipment

New York City Local Law 12 requires all taverns and restaurants that sell food for on-site consumption have cardiopulmonary resuscitation equipment, also known as CPR kit, on the premises.

The resuscitation equipment includes: 1 adult exhaled air resuscitation mask; 1 pediatric exhaled air resuscitation mask; 2 pairs of latex gloves.

The masks must be certified for use by the U. S. Food and Drugs Administration. All used equipment must be promptly discarded and replaced.

Customers must be notified that the resuscitation equipment is available and be informed where it is available and where they can learn CPR. This information can be provided on a sign or on the menu.



## PERSONAL HYGIENE

Because we all have disease causing microorganisms on us, we (people) pose the greatest threat to food safety. In order to control the contamination of food and food-related equipment, everyone must practice good personal hygiene. Here are some simple rules to follow in order to ensure good personal hygiene:

1. Bathe daily and keep hair clean and neat.
2. Wear clean, washable outer garments.
3. Wear a hair restraint to keep hair out of food and hands from touching your hair.
4. Wear a clean bandage and disposable glove over a fresh wound.
5. Wash hands thoroughly and often:
  - before putting on gloves.
  - before starting work.
  - after eating, smoking or drinking.
  - after sneezing or coughing.
  - after touching raw food.
  - after touching your hair, nose, ears, neck or other body parts.

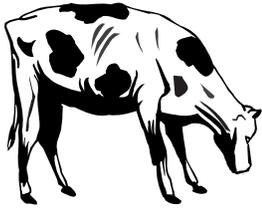
Resuscitation masks and latex gloves are available at:

Learn CPR. For information, contact the American Red Cross

#### Sample Sign

Neither the owner of the establishment nor the staff are obliged to use the equipment or give medical assistance to a victim.

For further information, please call (212) 676 1600/1



Recent publicity about “Mad Cow Disease”, the popular name for *bovine spongiform encephalopathy* or BSE, has led to some concerns about the safety of our food supply. The United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) and the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) have instituted a number of increasingly stringent protective measures involving importation restrictions, feed regulations and bans, and quarantining and destruction of farm animals when necessary, to prevent BSE from entering the United States. The New York City Health Department’s role and your responsibility in protecting the public from BSE is to make sure that all meats are obtained from an approved source and have an USDA inspection stamp.

It is thought that BSE was caused when cattle were fed meat-and-bone meal that had been contaminated by the agent that causes this form of disease (known as a transmissible spongiform encephalitis) in sheep. The great majority of affected cattle are from Britain, although cattle from some other European nations

have been affected. BSE has not been detected among cattle in the United States. The BSE epidemic in cattle in Britain peaked in 1993 and is now declining.

Soon after the identification of BSE in cattle, questions were raised as to whether or not this disease could affect humans. There is evidence that some fatal cases of progressive, degenerative neurologic disease in humans may have been caused by the same infectious agent that causes BSE, possibly because of consumption by humans of food contaminated with the BSE agent. In humans, this neurologic disease is known as a variant of Creutzfeldt-Jakob disease (vCJD). Of the 90 vCJD cases that had been confirmed as of November 2000, 87 have occurred in the United Kingdom, one in Ireland and two in France.

Although the nature of the infectious agent that causes BSE is not certain, it is believed to be a modified form of a normal cell protein known as a prion. Prions are not viruses, bacteria or parasites, so proper cooking and freezing and sterilization of

contaminated meat or items that come into contact with contaminated meat will not eliminate the agent.

Since cooking, freezing, hot holding or cold holding processes do not kill the agent, our first line of defense is to ensure that all meats come from an approved source. New York City Health Code Sub-section 81.07(i) and New York State Sanitary Code 14-1.31d require food establishments to obtain all foods, including meats, from an approved source. All foods must be purchased from commercial suppliers under regulatory control. USDA regulates all meat products and foods containing meat products. All meats and

food containing meat sold in the United States are required to bear the seal of USDA.

Please remember that Department of Health inspectors consider food that is not obtained from an approved source a public health hazard. Any food item for which the source cannot be identified is considered adulterated. Department of Health inspectors will embargo, discard or close an establishment if adulterated food is found, in order to protect the public’s health. Your cooperation in assuring that the food purchased by your establishment is from an established source will make such an action unnecessary and will protect the public.

#### DID YOU KNOW?

Garlic-in-oil and fresh herbs-in-oil mixtures are considered potentially hazardous as they are conducive to the growth of the *Clostridium botulinum* bacteria that cause the foodborne illness Botulism.

Garlic and herbs are products of the soil. Storage of garlic and herbs in an anaerobic environment, which is provided by the oil, encourage the growth of *Clostridium botulinum* found naturally in soil. Commercially prepared mixtures are acidified to prevent the growth of this microorganism and are safe.

If garlic-in-oil and fresh herbs-in-oil mixtures are prepared in your foodservice establishment, be sure to take the following steps to make them safe:

- ♦ Make just enough that can be used up daily and discard any leftovers.

- ♦ Refrigerate the mixture. Don’t leave it unrefrigerated for more than 2 hours.

- ♦ Should you need to prepare an amount for more than one day, you need to have a Certified Food Technologist prepare a HACCP plan outlining the preparation of the product. You must adhere strictly to this plan and have it available for Department of Health inspectors.

Should you have difficulty following the above steps, you should use commercially prepared products.



## WANTED: FOR CONTAMINATING HUMAN FOOD ...

### Place of Birth:

Manure, garbage or other soft, rotting substance.

### Preferred Foods:

Moist, sweet material. Flies must liquefy solid foods with saliva before eating.

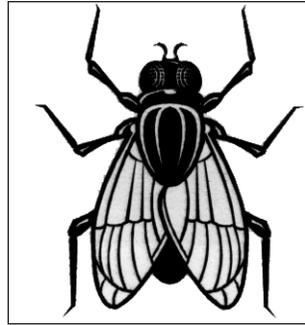
### To prevent harboring this vermin:

- Keep doors and windows closed at all times. If this is not possible, install screens or "air curtains".
- Repair or replace damaged screens.

- Keep outdoor garbage containers tightly closed. Empty indoor and outdoor garbage containers frequently.
- Place outdoor garbage containers as far as possible from building entrances

### To Capture this Outlaw:

- Electronic traps or sticky fly paper can be used; however, they may not be installed over food preparation areas.
- Electronic traps must be designed so that the cap-



tured fly stays in the trap; its body parts cannot be sprayed onto food, equipment or utensils.

- Clean traps frequently.

Source: FOOD TALK Winter 2000

## COMPUTERIZED INSPECTION SYSTEM

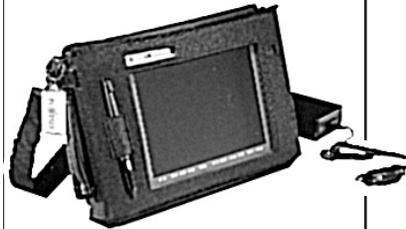
Over the past several years, the Department of Health has been developing a program to use handheld computers to record food inspections. This system is now ready to be implemented.

During an inspection, the inspector will walk around with a computer and input all

the findings. At the end, you will be shown the inspection report on the computer and asked for your signature at the bottom of the screen. The inspector will then print a clear, legible copy of the report for you.

This report will be different from previous ones, but it

will have the same and more information on it. A new section called "Hot Topics" will give you information on current public health issues.



If you have questions or comments regarding this newsletter, please call the Bureau of Inspections or the Health Academy. The telephone numbers are listed below.

### If you wish to contact:

#### ADMINISTRATIVE TRIBUNAL

66 John Street, 11th floor, NY, NY 10038

☎ (212) 361-1000

#### BUREAU OF INSPECTIONS

253 Broadway, 12th floor, Box CN59A, NY, NY 10007

☎ (212) 676-1600

#### CITYWIDE LICENSING CENTER

42 Broadway, 5th floor, NY, NY 10004

☎ (212) 487-4436

#### HEALTH ACADEMY

160 West 100th Street, NY, NY 10025

☎ (212) 280-9211

#### Inspector General

80 Maiden Lane, NY, NY 10005

☎ (212) 825-2141

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