

City of Milwaukee Health Department Disease Control and Environmental Health Division  
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# Food for Thought: An Update for Food Operators

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## JULY 2010

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### Your License, Please!

When your inspector comes, he or she must check your permits. Chapter 68-4.4 of the Milwaukee Code of Ordinances requires that you post your Food Dealer License in a conspicuous place on the premises.

Similarly, Section 12-201.11 of the Wisconsin Food Code requires you to post the Certified Food Manager Certificate. This is the credential issued by the Wisconsin Department of Health Services to food handlers who have passed an approved class and exam in food safety.

Please stay up to date with this. Often, establishment operators display certificates of class completion, but don't display the state certificate. The state certificate (which is now on plain paper) is the one you must post. Posting the class certificate is optional.

The permits can be in public view, or in the office or kitchen. But have them handy! Don't ask your inspector to wait while you search through envelopes and piles of paper.

The placard provided by your inspector, which informs customers of your last inspection date, does have to be in public view.

For a new or duplicate certificate from the Wisconsin Department of Health Services, use this link: [www.dhs.wisconsin.gov/forms](http://www.dhs.wisconsin.gov/forms). Type the words "food manager" in the search to find an application form.

If you take the same care to display the permits related to your food business as for alcohol, cigarettes and capacity, it will streamline inspections for both you and your inspector.

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**Weights & Measures News**  
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In 2010, bar code scanners will be licensed.  
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### Health Department Online

We constantly strive to make it easier for you to pay fees and apply for licenses online. Our latest innovation is a fill-in Temporary Food License application form. Event vendors can go to [www.milwaukee.gov/tempfood](http://www.milwaukee.gov/tempfood) and locate the Fill-in application form. Save a visit to our offices, and a search for parking. Complete it, save it, and then e-mail it to [foodlicense@milwaukee.gov](mailto:foodlicense@milwaukee.gov). We'll take over from there. We intend to add other forms in the near future.

Keep the following list of web addresses handy, as there is a wealth of information for food vendors of all types on our site:

- [www.milwaukee.gov/tempfood](http://www.milwaukee.gov/tempfood)
- [/mobilefood](#)
- [/foodlicense](#)
- [/farmmarket](#)
- [/foodsafety](#)
- [/weightsandmeasures](#)
- [/payfee](#)
- [/businessfoodsafety](#)

### Oh No – Norovirus!

Norovirus has been in the news again lately. The Waukesha County Health Department confirmed that Norovirus was the organism responsible for sickening banquet goers at a suburban hotel in May. Norovirus causes severe vomiting and diarrhea. It's inconvenient and painful for well people, and can be dangerous for the very young, old, and people weakened by an existing medical condition.

Do you want to do the right thing for your customers and your business? Do you want to stay out of the headlines, away from attorneys and angry customers? If your answer is yes, talk frequently with everyone who

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## Food for Thought, *continued*

touches food, ice or utensils at your store or restaurant. Make sure they're aware that as food workers, they must report to management if suffering from

- 1) diarrhea
- 2) vomiting
- 3) fever
- 4) jaundice
- 5) sore throat with fever
- 6) sores or scabs containing pus, on the hand, wrist, or exposed body part.

Employees (owners and managers included) may not work with food unless they are free of these symptoms, or have a doctor's documentation that the symptom is related to a condition not transmissible through food.

H1N1 Flu made everyone alert to signs of respiratory illness. Food managers must be concerned with intestinal illnesses too. When someone's suffering from diarrhea, there won't be coughs and sneezes to alert you. You must have good communication with your staff.

If a staff member reports a condition to you, and you're not certain what the public health laws require, call us. We'll find answers for you. A Norovirus outbreak can occur at the cleanest, most professionally run establishment if a food handler is ill and on the job. Don't let it happen on your watch!

### FDA Says "Be ALERT"

We hope that Milwaukee will never be targeted by criminals or terrorists who attempt to contaminate the food supply. The threat of intentional food tampering is something the Food and Drug Administration and other federal agencies take very seriously. Their "ALERT" Initiative provides food operators with advice on how to safeguard their establishments. **ALERT** stands for **Assure, Look, Employees, Reports and Threat**.

The FDA recommends that managers look at their

physical plant, suppliers and delivery procedures, employee policies and emergency plans to find areas that are vulnerable to the actions of criminals. **[www.cfsan.fda.gov/alert](http://www.cfsan.fda.gov/alert)**, their website, has checklists and recommendations.

You may feel such threats are remote from your corner of the world and the industry. But people sometimes leave employment angry, or become involved in domestic disputes that spill over into the workplace. Many ALERT recommendations also make good sense for inventory control and loss prevention in general, so take a look at their materials!

### What's a "Safe SOURCE"?

The WI Food Code requires that you purchase all foods from an "approved source". How do you know if the food you are receiving is safe and code approved? You should ask the following questions:

- 1) Is it from a licensed facility? Maintain copies of invoices/bills of lading. If you are not sure about where the item was made, ask to see the vendor's license.
- 2) Is it properly labeled? The label should have the name of the food, name and address of the manufacturer, weight/volume of the package, and list of ingredients. Meat and poultry must have a Wisconsin or USDA stamp and safe handling stickers.

*Absolutely no food prepared in a private home can be sold at a licensed store or restaurant!* If you are uncertain, or something doesn't look right, do not accept the food. It's your responsibility to provide safe food to your customers. Anyone who cannot show a license and provide proper labeling is not a safe vendor for you.



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