



ECTOR COUNTY, TEXAS

REGULATIONS AND REQUIREMENTS OF FOOD SERVICE ESTABLISHMENTS

Effective food protection requires the cooperation of the food service operator and the advise and assistance of the public health inspector. To help food service operators to understand the principles of food sanitation/protection and the provisions of a safe and healthful environment, the following guidelines are furnished to new or established food service operators.

PRE-PLAN INSPECTION AND PLANS

Submission of plans (blueprints) to the Ector County Health Department are required when a food establishment is constructed, extensively remodeled, or an existing structure is converted to a food establishment. Plans and specifications must be submitted to this Department for review before construction begins. Properly prepared plans should include the layout, arrangement, mechanical plans, construction materials, and list of proposed equipment. A pre-permit inspection is also required to determine the operator's compliance with approved plans and applicable laws before the food establishment begins operation.

I. Food

Food must be in sound condition and safe for human consumption. No home-canned or home prepared products can be available. Food that is removed from the original container shall be labeled on a new container.

II. Food Protection

The most critical item in food preparation is the temperature requirements of potentially hazardous foods (see Fig. 1). Dairy products, eggs, seafood, poultry, and meat are all considered potentially hazardous foods. The temperature of potentially hazardous foods shall be 41 degrees Fahrenheit or below during refrigeration or 135 degrees or above during hot storage. Adequate facilities shall be available to provide these critical temperature requirements. Thermometers must also be available to monitor this equipment for temperature. Where it is impractical to install a thermometer (salad bar, steam tables, etc.) a product thermometer must be available to check internal food temperature. Frozen food must be stored at a temperature of 0 degrees Fahrenheit or below. When thawing potentially hazardous foods, the following methods must be used.

1. In a 45 degrees Fahrenheit refrigerator until thawing is accomplished.
2. Under potable running 70 degrees Fahrenheit water.
3. In a microwave oven.
4. As part of the conventional cooking process.

Food that is served to a consumer cannot be re-served. Food must be protected from contamination at all times. (Example: salad bar sneeze-cough guard, display cases, coverings, storage six inches off the floor, etc.). Food and ice must be handled and prepared on clean, sanitized surfaces. Suitable dispensing and

handling utensils must be used to avoid unnecessary manual contact with food or ice. The storage of dispensing utensils shall be as follows:

1. In the food with the handle not contacting the food.
 2. Stored clean and dry.
 3. Stored in running water.
- III. Personnel

Employees who are ill or injured shall be assigned work in areas where there is no food contact. Employees should practice good hygiene habits. Frequent hand washing is a requirement. No smoking will be allowed in food preparation areas. Employees must wear clean outer clothing and effective hair restraints.

IV. Food Equipment and Utensils

All food contact surfaces of equipment must be constructed of easily cleanable and safe, non-toxic materials and located for cleaning accessibility. All non-food contact surfaces of equipment must be constructed of easily cleanable and safe materials and located for cleaning accessibility. Ventilation hoods and such devices should be effective in preventing grease from collecting on walls, ceilings, and dripping on food and other surfaces. Equipment should be located in such a way as to prevent sufficient cleaning space is not available around equipment, the space between should be less than one-thirty/second of an inch, or sealed if exposed to seepage.

Dishwashing Facilities: For manual cleaning of utensils a three compartment sink is required (see Fig. 2). For mechanical cleaning of utensils, the wash water temperature must be a minimum of 120 degrees Fahrenheit and a chemical sanitizer must be automatically dispensed in the final rinse at 75 degrees Fahrenheit.

Chemical test kits must be available for all employees to measure the sanitizing solution. Thermometers and pressure gauges should be installed and accurate. All gross food particles must be removed prior to washing. If hot water is used to sanitize on final rinse of mechanical or dishwasher, the minimum wash temperature must be 140 degrees Fahrenheit and the final rinse water must be 180 degrees Fahrenheit. Thermometers and immersion baskets and gloves must be provided.

The food contact surfaces of grills, griddles, microwaves, and food preparation areas and utensils must be washed and sanitized at regular intervals during the day. Non-food contact surfaces of equipment must be cleaned as necessary to eliminate dust and food particles or stains.

All equipment and utensils must be air dried after sanitization. Glasses, cups, and unprotected utensils must be stored inverted and six inches off the floor. All tableware must be stored with handles presented to employees and customers.

Single service articles (paper plates, styrofoam, plastic) must be stored six inches off the floor and covered. These articles must be dispensed in a method that prevents contamination by consumer or employee. The re-use of single service articles is prohibited.

V. Water

Potable (safe) water under pressure at the required temperatures shall be provided for cooking, washing, personal hygiene and drinking. Beginning Dec. 1, 2010 all new food service operators desiring to open a food service business; which is on a water well serving more than 25 clients at least 60 days out of the year, will be required to have their water well evaluated by the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality. A determination will be made by this agency whether a chlorinator will be required on the water well. A new food service operator must receive clearance in writing from the TCEQ that their system meets the drinking water standards as stated in Title

30, Texas Administration Code, Section 290.38. The clearance must be brought to the Ector County Health Dept. before a pre-inspection can be done on the new facility. The Texas Commission on Environmental Quality can be reached at 432-570-4795, and is located at 3300 N. A St. Bldg. 4-107 Midland, TX 79705.

VI. Sewage

Sewage disposal must meet legal requirements.

VII. Plumbing

Plumbing shall be installed and maintained in accordance with the Plumbing Code. Grease traps should be located for easy cleaning, maintenance, and inspection. Devices must be installed to prevent possible backflow at all fixtures where a hose can be attached. (See Fig. 3) A new requirement for new or remodeled establishments is a utility mop sink. All drain pipes should be six inches off the floor for maintenance.

VIII. Toilet and Hand washing Facilities

Toilet facilities are required by City Code and shall be accessible and designed to be easily cleanable. Toilet doors should have self-closing doors. Hand washing sinks must be available and installed in food preparation areas for easy access to employees to prevent cross-contamination of foods. All lavatory supplies must be furnished and a covered waste receptacle in all ladies toilets is required.

IX. Insect, Rodent, Animal Control

The premises must be maintained to prevent the harborage or feeding of insects or rodents. Pest control measures include:

1. Mechanical means – screens, traps, air curtains.
2. Chemical means – sprays, repellants, and baits.
3. Prevention – sanitation and good housekeeping.

X. Floors, Walls, and Ceilings

Floors, walls, and ceilings must be properly constructed, smooth, easily cleanable and maintained in good repair. Only dustless cleaning methods shall be used (vacuum or wet mop). Carpeting is prohibited in kitchen, food storage, and toilet areas. Attached equipment (light fixtures, vent covers, fans, etc.) shall also be easily cleanable in a good repair.

XI. Lighting

Sufficient lighting must be provided to all work areas for cleaning purposes and safety. All light fixtures must be shielded to protect food against broken glass.

XII. Ventilation

Ventilation of all rooms must be sufficient to eliminate excessive heat, steam, obnoxious odors and smoke. In new or remodeled establishments, all rooms must be mechanically vented wherever obnoxious odors originate.

XIII. Dressing Rooms

If employees are provided uniforms and required to change at the establishment, a designated dressing room with lockers should be provided. Lockers should also be provided for employees personal belongings.

XIV. Other Operations

Toxic items used for maintenance, sanitization, and pest control, shall be stored separately and labeled. The use of toxic materials should comply with the manufacturer’s recommendations and warnings. The food service operator must insure protection of employees and customers during use of toxic materials. Personal medications and first aid supplies must also be stored separately.

The premises of the food service establishment shall be maintained free of litter, unnecessary articles, and insect and rodent harborage (weeds, litter, stagnant pools, etc.). A complete separation by partition or self-closing door is required between living or sleeping quarters and the food service area. Laundry facilities, if provided, must also be separated from the food service area. After being laundered, clean linen must be stored in laundry bags or nonabsorbent containers.

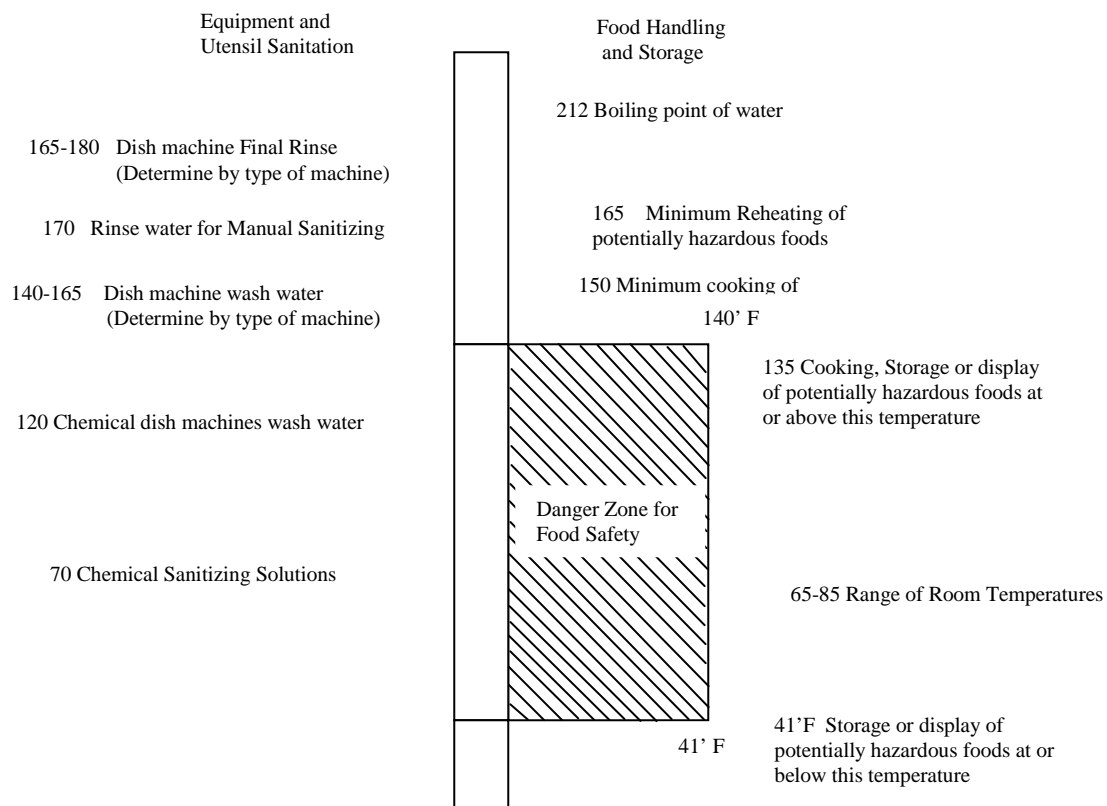
Effective food protection requires complete understanding-between the Health Department and the food service operator. The Health Department’s responsibility is to safeguard the public’s health and prevent disease. The food service operator’s responsibility is to provide wholesome, uncontaminated food in a clean and safe environment. Cooperation is essential.

XV. Other Operations (Con’t)

Medications and First Aid supplies must also be stored separately

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NPA

Sink Compartments large enough to accommodate utensils or equipment.
Each compartment supplied with Hot and Cold water.
Pre-soak and pre-scrape equipment and utensils when necessary.

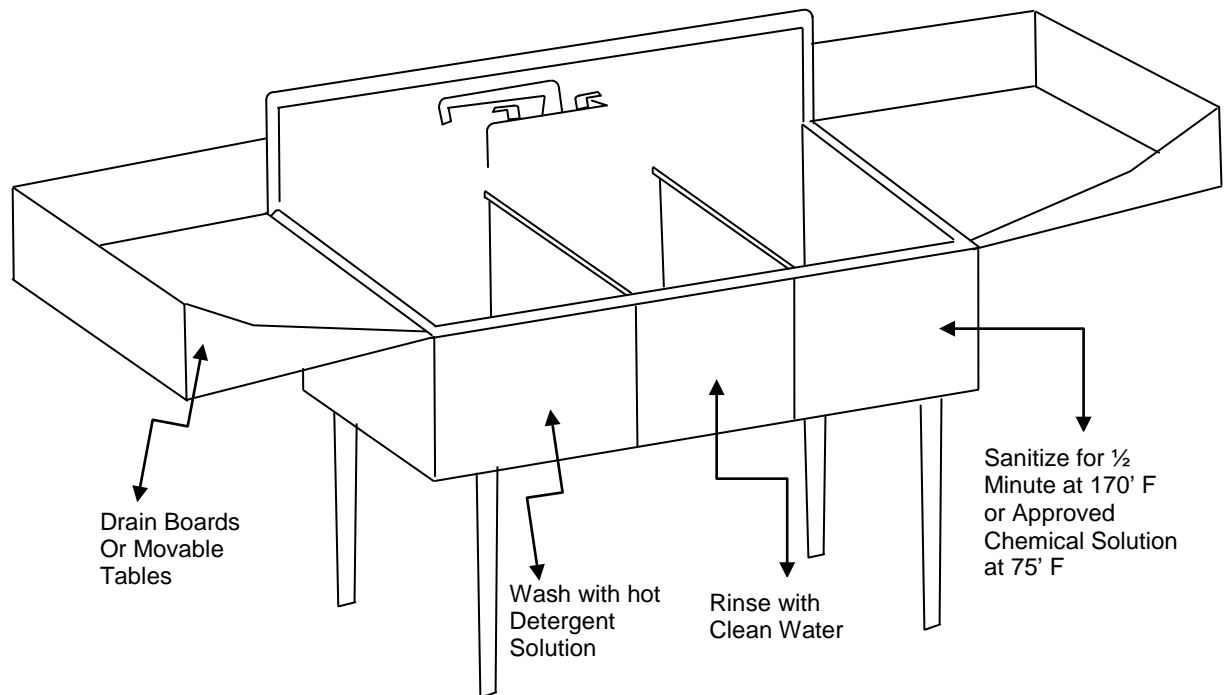


Figure 2.

If sanitizing with 170 F water, provide for:

1. A device to maintain the water temperature.
2. A thermometer to check water temperature.
3. Baskets to allow complete immersion of utensils and equipment.

If sanitizing with chemical solution, provide a test kit to measure solution concentration.