



EXCHANGE STAFF VETERINARIAN

Veterinary, Preventive Medicine and Public Health Newsletter

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Keeping Foods Safe in the Summer: The Myth Concerning the Safety of Mayonnaise:



We've all heard the stories of summer picnics and food borne related illnesses caused by the potato or egg salad often inappropriately blamed on the mayonnaise. If you have ever worked in a Burger King® restaurant, chances are that at one time or another, you have been cited

for storing mayonnaise at room temperature. In reality, commercially prepared mayonnaise actually keeps salads etc. safe because of its acidity level. Refrigeration is recommended after opening to prevent the product from breaking down visually, not bacteriologically. In accordance with the FDA Food Code and TB Med 530, foods are not considered potentially hazardous if their pH (acidity) is less than <4.6 or water activity is less than 0.85. The pH of Burger King's mayonnaise is below 4.6 making it a safe product to use as directed in accordance with the Burger King® manual.

Role of Preventive Medicine, Public Health & Veterinary Food Inspectors in the Opening of Food Concessions:



In a past newsletter, the differences between veterinary, preventive medicine and public health inspectors was touched upon but there still appears to be some confusion concerning who to contact prior to the opening of food concession operations.

While preventive medicine and veterinary inspectors are frequently both called "vets", they are two distinct specialties falling under two separate chains of command. Preventive Medicine has cognizance over sanitation standards (i.e., proper number of sinks, cooking temperatures, glove use); while veterinary services has responsibility of ensuring foods are purchased from approved food sources. Prior to the opening of any food concession on an Army installation, the facility whether it be fixed or roving, must be inspected and approved by both preventive medicine and veterinary services inspection personnel. Medical personnel should be given as much notice as possible but NLT 14 days prior to opening.

To prevent the delay of a facility from opening due to unapproved food sources, contact veterinary services (public health if on an Air Force base) prior

to awarding a contract to ensure the contractor is able and willing to procure from authorized sources.

Do not count on preventive medicine and veterinary services to collaborate with each other on inspections. It is the service business manager's responsibility to ensure both are contacted and have been involved in the inspection process prior to opening. Facilities should not be opened until both have given their approval to operate. On Air Force installations, the public health inspector serves both functions. The process of determining whether or not a food item is required to be from an approved source can be very challenging and is best left to those who have experience using the Worldwide Directory of Sanitary Approved Food Establishments for Armed Forces Procurement.

Snow Cone Shacks: The typical snow cone operation uses block ice instead of crushed or cubed ice.



Currently there are three establishments listed in the Approved Food Source directory specifically approved for "block" ice. The majority of ice plants are approved for "packaged ice" which in most cases does not include "block" ice. If you can't tell from looking at the approved food source database, ask your Army "vet" or Air Force "PH" inspector to verify.

Barbicide® Concentration: In order to be effective, yet safe, Barbicide® concentrate must be prepared in accordance with the label's instructions.

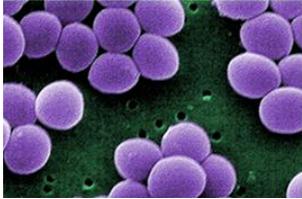


Eyeballing for the appropriate color is not an appropriate method of preparation. If using Barbicide®, the most commonly used barber/beauty shop instrument disinfectant, mix two ounces (1/4 cup) of concentrate to 32 ounces (4 cups) of cold water. If using Barbicide® Plus concentrate, mix 1 ounce (2 tablespoons) of concentrate with 128 ounces (one gallon) of cold water. Just as important as proper concentration, is proper contact time. Contact time is the length of time an item must stay moist with a disinfectant to be effective. For Barbicide® and Barbicide® Plus, ten minutes of moist contact time is required to be effective. Barbicide® also has a product that comes in a wipe form, which has a substantially shorter contact time requirement of only two minutes (three minutes for effectiveness against tuberculosis).



If using the solution, it should be changed whenever it becomes contaminated or diluted incorrectly but at a minimum daily. Containers should be labeled with the date of preparation for verification purposes.

Bacteria Trivia: Most people with gastrointestinal signs equate their illness to the last meal they consumed while in reality the offending food culprit could have been consumed days, weeks or even months earlier. One of the few



exceptions when gastrointestinal signs are seen within a few hours after exposure is Staphylococcal food poisoning caused by eating foods contaminated with toxins produced by the bacterium *Staphylococcus aureus*. The most common way for foods to be contaminated with Staphylococcus is through contact with food workers who carry the bacteria in their nasal passages or on their skin or through contaminated milk and cheeses. As the bacteria multiplies in food, it produces toxins that can cause illness. The toxins are resistant to heat and cannot be destroyed by cooking. Foods at highest risk of contamination with Staphylococcus aureus and subsequent toxin production are those that are made by hand and require no cooking. Symptoms usually appear within one to six hours however symptoms can appear in as little as 30 minutes after consumption. Nausea, vomiting, stomach cramps, and diarrhea are common complaints. The illness is usually mild and most patients recover after one to three days.

The best way to prevent Staphylococcus food poisoning is to:

- ✓ Wash hands with soap and water before handling and preparing food
- ✓ Abstain from preparing food if you have a nose or eye infection or improperly covered wound or skin infection on your hands and wrists
- ✓ Store foods at the proper temperatures (hot foods over 135°F and cold foods at 40°F or below)
- ✓ Prevent cross-contamination between raw and prepared products
- ✓ Keep contact surfaces clean and sanitized

Installation Food Vulnerability Assessment Teams: Vulnerability Assessment Teams (VATs) identify and make recommendations to correct areas of weakness that might make us vulnerable in times of crisis, attack or destabilization. Vulnerability assessments vary from installation to installation with some assessments much more stringent than others but generally the most common areas reviewed are:

- Snack Avenue bulk food/drink containers and dispensers to include bulk ice dispensers
- Bulk CO2 tanks and/or access to CO2 ports
- Visitor controls (signing in/out sheets, escorts)
- Gasoline dispensers and containers
- Sanitation practices

The group usually meets quarterly at a minimum, in compliance with DoD regulations. Annually the VAT conducts an inspection and reports on vulnerabilities throughout the installation. Every three years, there is a Joint Service Assessment conducted by outside parties on the installation.

Local GM's should be partners in the VAT decision making process as in other issues. By being proactive participants of the meetings, concerns over challenges of implementing recommended/directed changes are more likely to be taken into consideration. It also presents the opportunity to discuss funding of any proposed changes since many are the responsibility of the installation and not the Exchange.

Most VAT meetings require security clearance before you can attend these meetings. Check with your local Anti-Terrorist Officer (ATO) to determine what the requirements are at your installation. Once the final decisions are made on how to prevent credible threats, the Exchange should support those decisions fully to protect our customers from harm.

Link to Barber/Beauty Shop Sanitation Video:



Thanks to the courtesy of Colorado's Department of Regulatory

Activity, Exchange associates now have access to a 20 minute training video highlighting the key sanitation procedures for barber/beauty shop instruments and equipment. This video is an excellent educational tool for our SBMs, barber/beauty shop concessions, and PH/PM inspectors. At this time the video is only accessible on line to Exchange associates but if anyone else is interested in obtaining a copy, please contact us. [Barber & Beauty Shop Sanitation Video Hyperlink](#)

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Useful links (control click to use):

[Worldwide Directory for Sanitarily Approved Food Establishments for Armed Forces Procurement Staff Vet/Food & Drug Safety Program \(AAFES Associates Only\)](#)
[Staff Vet/Food & Drug Safety Pgm \(Non-AAFES Associates\)](#)