



Veterinary Services, Preventive Medicine and Public Health Newsletter

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Importance of Prior Coordination:

Recently The Exchange celebrated its 120th Anniversary with installation level celebrations worldwide to commemorate the anniversary and to show appreciation to our customers. One Exchange organized a weekend event with outside food vendors serving their products to our customers.

Unfortunately, Exchange management did not coordinate with the local Army Veterinary Service or Preventive Medicine prior to the event. The vendors arrived and were not in compliance with many aspects of the Tri-Service Food Code (TSFC) to include not having food handler training and use of unapproved food sources for potentially hazardous foods. Due to these issues, the installation forced the vendors to leave and the celebration was not the success that it could have been.

Please remember that prior coordination with installation level food safety and sanitation regulatory activities is necessary regardless of how long a food service vendor is going to operate on the installation. Communication with local Veterinary Service, Preventive Medicine, and Public Health personnel is imperative whenever new food concepts or events are brought onto an installation.

"Cottage Food Laws" and the Tri-Service Food Code

Many states have passed laws that allow small food producers to make homemade low-risk foods and then sell these products at farmers markets, fairs, festivals, etc. Each state's requirements vary as to where and what items may be produced and sold without inspection by a state or municipality regulatory agency.

In order to protect the health of our DoD beneficiaries, the TSFC prohibits food prepared in a private home to be offered for human consumption in food establishments, including Exchange retail and food service operations.

The TSFC does allow home prepared foods, except home-canned foods, in support of special events such as organizational cookouts, bake sales, unit functions, etc.

Ice Machines:

Because ice is a manufactured potentially hazardous food item, it must comply with Federal laws and applicable Exchange sanitation instructions to ensure its safety. Requirements for Express stores manufacturing their own ice in-house can be found in EOP 40-11, chapter 39.

Cleaning and sanitizing of ice production machines should be in accordance with the manufacturers' guidance. The minimum cleaning and sanitizing frequency is as follows:

- **DAILY:** General housekeeping and maintenance of the ice manufacturing area, to include removal of any accumulated debris and assessing the area for potential compromise of food sanitation or security.
- **MONTHLY:** Clean the exterior of the machine and remove any dust, grime, mold, slime or foreign material. Disassemble removable parts to facilitate cleaning and check for needed repairs. Clean the interior of machine to include storage bin, doors, gaskets, and other surfaces with soap and water, rinse with potable water, and then sanitize with a chlorine solution or other approved sanitizing agent. Use of test strips or a kit to verify the concentration of approved sanitizers is required. Discard the first batch of ice following cleaning to ensure any residual sanitizer is removed.

It is critical that facility managers ensure employees involved in bagging ice are properly trained. Individuals bagging ice must wear clean clothing (a clean apron or full-length smock is acceptable) and appropriate hair restraint. The filling spout or ice scoop must be cleaned and sanitized before starting each packaging operation using a 200-ppm chlorine solution. Written ice machine cleaning and sanitizing instructions should be conspicuously posted and a logbook maintained to document cleaning frequency.

Food Safety and Sanitation Training Compliance:

In accordance with the Tri-Service Food Code, all food establishments must have a PIC who is responsible for the operation at the time of inspection and who must be present during all hours of operation. To qualify as a PIC, an individual must be trained, and show proficiency in sanitation and food safety by passing a test that is part of an accredited training program and then maintain that certification. The best way to accomplish this is through completion of the ServSafe® course. The ServSafe® course is offered through the Exchange, or it may be provided by an outside agency. To take the course through the Exchange, prospective students should contact the local AAFES General Manager, Food Court Manager or Services Business Manager. This training requirement is applicable to all food establishments and Express stores operated by the Exchange or its concessions. Other Exchange food associates, to include those working in Express Snack Avenue areas, must complete sanitation and personal hygiene training via the LEX online training

system and/or thru local training resources to ensure associates understand the significance of safety-conscious behavior and what safety best practices should be incorporated into daily activities

Documentation of associate training must be available for review at the time of inspection. It is highly recommended that all food establishments maintain a file of training certificates for all of their employees.

Sanitizing: Why Do We Do It and How Do We Do It Right?:

Sanitization is a process that reduces the numbers of disease causing organisms to safe levels. This process is accomplished through the use of heat or chemicals after proper cleaning of equipment, utensils, and surfaces.

Hot Water Sanitization - Sanitize equipment or utensils by immersion in hot water maintained at 171° F. or higher.

Chemical Sanitization - To sanitize with chemicals, items must be in contact with the sanitizer for a specified amount of time with the sanitizing solution at the proper concentration. Always follow the manufacturer's instructions when mixing chemical sanitizer and use chemical test strips or test kits to verify the chemical concentration of the sanitizers being used. Concentrations below minimum levels will not sanitize effectively, while sanitizers used in concentrations above recommended levels can leave toxic residues

Food Defense and Vulnerability Assessments:

Since 9/11, the DoD has placed increasing emphasis not only on food safety, but food defense as well. Food defense pertains to protecting our food supply from intentional contamination. DoD guidelines require that each installation's vulnerability be assessed on a periodic basis. Several agencies conduct these assessments which focus on the installation's ability to deter and respond to a terrorist incident. Included in the overall inspection is a food vulnerability assessment (FVA) of all installation food establishments.

Some of the possible vulnerabilities within Exchange operations include:

- Unsecured bulk ice (fountain soda machines, bulk ice machines and bagged ice coolers).
- Vendors, contractors or visitors without escorts.
- Rear doors to warehouses and supply areas left open or unlocked.
- Ready-to-eat food storage areas being readily accessible to customers.

Make sure our facilities aren't a soft target by emphasizing security practices/food defense with your associates and conduct self inspections regularly. You can also contact your installation Army Veterinary Service or Air Force

Public Health activities for consultation on mitigating vulnerabilities identified within your facilities.

Barber/Beauty Shop, Spa, and Nail Salon Sanitation:

Sanitation and hygiene standards at barber, beauty, nail, and spa operations should meet the requirements set by Department of Army (DA) Pamphlet 40-11 and AFI 48-117, *Public Facility Sanitation*. Some basic requirements to keep our customers safe in these operations include:

- Hair and debris may be removed from the exterior surface of clippers with a nylon-bristle brush that is used for only that purpose. A vacuum cleaner may be used to assist in removing hair from floors, back bars, and drawers.
- The use of styptic pencils, lump alum, common brushes, neck dusters, sponges, shaving mugs, shaving brushes, and powder puffs is prohibited. Brushless shaving creams and clean towels are allowed. Plastic hair brushes with plastic projections instead of bristles are authorized, provided they are disinfected according to current regulations.
- Cover barber and beauty chair headrests with a clean paper towel or unused towel. Use a neck strip on each customer to keep the customer's neck from touching the chair. Use capes for all shampoos, face, scalp or beauty services.
- Barber, beauty, nail, and spa technicians will clean and disinfect all instruments immediately after being used on a customer. Scissors, combs, brushes, clipper blades, manicure, pedicure, and other tools will be thoroughly washed with soap and hot water to remove film and debris. Instruments will then be dried with a clean disposable towel. Following cleaning and drying, instruments must be disinfected with an appropriate disinfectant or sanitizing solution. Associates must follow the disinfectant or sanitizer product instructions to ensure the appropriate contact time is achieved.

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Useful links (control-click to use links):

- [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 Program \(Non-AAFES Associates\)](#)