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The Everclean Report

Unclear Health Department Violations

Special Interest Articles:

Unclear HD violations

Food Storage Hierarchy

People occasionally make mistakes, including your health inspector. When the Health Department is visiting your operation, they may question a food handling situation that you may think is valid. While this type of situation is rare, Do Not Argue with them. Health department inspectors may make a mistake and will call out a violation that does not seem correct. Here are some suggestions if that happens:

- Ask the inspector questions about the violation. If this is new information or a new focus, you will be responsible to implement and train your staff.
- If it is something minor that can be addressed right away and won't impact your operations negatively, fix it or do it right away, while the inspector is there if possible. Then ask the inspector to check to make sure things are in accordance with their direction.
- If the inspector is asking for something that is unusual or contradictory to your standard operations, ask the inspector to put their expectations in writing. Put policies or procedures in place as needed. If a follow up inspector asks why you are doing something "this way", you have written documentation to show that you are in compliance with what the last inspector requested.

Ask for a specific food code reference. Then call Everclean or your corporate office to discuss the violation and see what the inspector is looking for. We may be able to help.

~M. Lichlyter

Food Storage Hierarchy

The food storage hierarchy is designed to protect food in storage should a leak, spill, or drip occur. Raw poultry should not contaminate other raw products, and all raw animal products should not contaminate ready to eat foods. The obvious focus is in a walk-in cooler, but there are some other areas to consider.

- Next to/ in front of line drawers or other display cases
- On the line, do you have food in the line drawer refrigerator "top" that may have opportunities of dripping raw product, juices or marinade into any RTE foods or lower cooking temperature foods?
- On the cook's line, under counter coolers and table top units, do you have RTE foods stored under raw proteins? Do you have raw proteins that could drip into other food with lower cooking temperatures?
- Are you using one scoop, tongs or spoons that touch multiple raw proteins?

Sushi is unique because the raw product is ready to eat. Be aware that sushi grade raw fish can not be stored with other ready to eat food such as salads because customers who order this do not expect to have raw fish product in their food. It should be stored separate from all foods if possible. If any of these answers are yes, take a look at methods that can help eliminate possible contamination.

~M. Lichlyter

Any comments or questions should be directed to info@evercleanservices.com.

Everclean Services

Phone:
(877) 532-5326
(818) 874-1290

Fax:
(818) 865-0465
E-Mail:

info@evercleanservices.com