

FOOD FOR THOUGHT

Fall 2013 (Sept./Oct./Nov.)

Deli Slicer: Potential Harbinger for Food Borne Illness

As restaurant owners and managers, you have your hands full when comes to focusing on food safety. Many owners and managers do a wonderful job when cleaning normal food contact surfaces. However, one piece of equipment is constantly being overlooked, and that is the commercial deli slicer. The Englewood Health Department is determined to raise awareness regarding sanitation concerns of commercial deli slicers.

Deli slicers are commonly used in retail and foodservice establishments to slice meats, cheeses and produce. Over time, they may become difficult or impossible to properly clean and sanitize. Failure to adequately clean and sanitize all surfaces of a deli slicer can contaminate food and cause illnesses or death.



Routine maintenance of all deli slicers is critical to preventing the equipment from becoming a significant food safety hazard. Recent outbreaks of food borne illness have been associated with the build-up of food soils and disease-causing microorganisms on areas of deli slicers that are difficult to clean and sanitize. Many seams between the connected parts and components of a typical deli slicer are sealed with sealants and gaskets. These seams can become worn, degraded or removed as a result of the heavy use and cleaning process that deli slicers undergo. As these seals and gaskets become degraded, spaces can be created that can trap debris and moisture, which can lead to areas that may not be able to be adequately cleaned and sanitized under normal cleaning conditions.



Deli Slicer Problem Areas That Are Hard To Clean

Carefully monitor these areas for any cracks, broken, missing or unattached parts:

- Ring Guard Mount: Food soil accumulation at the ring guard mount.
- Blade Guard: Food soil accumulation on the inside of the blade guard at the white plastic piece.
- Slicer Handle: Surfaces under the slicer handle can accumulate food soil and debris and require monitoring to prevent build-up.

What YOU Can Do

CLEAN and SANITIZE deli slicers per manufacturer's instructions at least once every four hours in order to prevent the growth of disease-causing bacteria.

- Keep the instructions posted near the slicer location and follow them closely.
- Simply wiping down a slicer to remove visible debris is not a substitute for thoroughly cleaning and sanitizing the equipment.

Routinely examine the condition of seams, seals and gaskets to confirm integrity of these seals while the slicer is assembled and before breaking down for cleaning and sanitizing.

- Look in hard-to-reach areas for food and liquid accumulations.

If a seal or gasket is broken, missing, unattached, defective or otherwise not performing its function, remove the slicer from service immediately and contact the slicer manufacturer for repair or replacement.

- All repairs should be performed by the manufacturer's authorized service representative or using repair kits available from or provided by the original manufacturer.

Have the slicer professionally serviced according to the manufacturer's recommended schedule.

- Ensure that the servicing includes examination of all seams and the routine replacement of seals and gaskets.
- Proper servicing may require that components be removed and then reattached with the proper reapplication of sealants or gaskets.

By following these guidelines, you can ensure that your deli slicer is not contaminating foods and keep your customers safe and happy.

For more information search www.fda.gov.

Keeping Rodents and Vermin out of your Restaurant

All food establishments and facilities (restaurants, delis, cafeterias, bars, grocery stores, meat and seafood markets, wholesale and retail warehouses, mobile carts and trucks etc.) must be maintained and operated so as to prevent the entrance and harborage of vermin. Vermin includes mice, rats, flies, cockroaches and other food-infesting insects. With the fall season quickly approaching and the weather getting colder, mice and vermin will begin to find places of shelter, with food making the restaurant the ideal place to be. Here are some tips to ensure that rodents do not make your restaurant their home.



- Ensure that all food debris is cleaned up. This includes food particles on the floor and food build up on all non-food contact surfaces.
- Secure a rodent extermination specialist contract where an integrated pest management system is being used. Do not take matters into your own hands by spraying roach spray or any other chemicals that can contaminate foods. This is a direct violation of Chapter 24 of the New Jersey Sanitary Code.
- Keep your doors closed. Many establishments leave their doors open, and this allows vermin and rodents a direct entrance into your establishment. Remember, this is also a violation of Englewood's Health Code.
- Inspect your restaurants for all possible ways vermin can gain entry into the establishment, and make sure you vermin-proof those areas. Some common entrance areas include spaces under doors and other holes in walls or ceilings. Point out these areas of concern to your pest management company and they will provide you with the best solution to close off these areas.
- Monitor your restaurants. As part of your daily opening and closing tasks, look for signs of vermin activity which may include rodent fecal droppings, products that have chew marks, or dead insects. Any of these may be an indication that you have a pest control issue, and you

must immediately inform your pest management company so that they may quickly correct the issue before it becomes a full blown infestation.

- Ensure that your pest management company is meeting your needs. Follow up with them and ensure that they are properly changing your glue traps and bait boxes and checking all areas of your restaurant to ensure all potential problem areas are being addressed.

As restaurant owners and managers, it is your responsibility to monitor and ensure your restaurant is rodent and vermin free. Identifying problem areas early is critical to correct a small rodent problem before it turns into a big one. If you have any questions or concerns you can always contact the Englewood Health Department.

Rules on the Use of Disposable Gloves in Kitchens

Disposable gloves are being used in kitchens by employees as a measure to ensure safe handling of food items and eliminate food contamination and food-borne illnesses. By following a few simple guidelines you can be certain that the disposable gloves are used in the best way possible while ensuring better food safety.

Wearing gloves should not be a substitute for hand washing

Disposable gloves are used in the kitchen to help prevent the spread of dangerous bacteria. Bacteria can, however, contaminate the outside of the gloves as easily as they can contaminate bare hands, and the moist interior of gloves can be an excellent breeding ground for bacteria.

Change Gloves Frequently

Gloves should be changed when shifting food-service tasks, such as when moving from preparing meats to preparing vegetables, after touching any part of the body, after using the bathroom, and any time they are damaged. According to the New Jersey Sanitary Code, hands should be washed every time gloves are changed.

Gloves are single use only

Once you take your gloves off, they should be discarded. In many instances during routine restaurant inspections, inspectors have noticed food handlers attempting to reuse loose-fitting poly gloves after taking them off. By doing this, you are running the risk of contaminating food.

Use the right gloves for the right task

Loose-fitting poly gloves are appropriate for situations in which gloves must be changed frequently, such as when a worker must frequently switch from food preparation to operating a cash register. More durable, form-fitting gloves, made from materials like latex and vinyl, are better for working with heat. They are better for performing a single task for an extended period, such as preparing one type of food, because of their durability.

Licensing News

The Department of Health will soon launch an on-line application, renewal, and payment process for retail licenses. The service will enhance the credit card payment options already offered through an agreement with VitalChek Network, a LexisNexis Company. Our partnership with VitalChek began by serving customers who needed a way to purchase vital records via the internet and has since added point-of-service credit card payment for any type of transaction.

Now, licensing applications developed by National Geomatica and VitalChek's On-Line Payment Services will allow business owners to submit license applications and renewals electronically. License fees may be paid on-line with a credit card or e-check. Payments can be made when the Department is closed, and it can't be lost in the mail! This service is available for a nominal fee to VitalChek - \$2.50 or 3.25%, whichever is greater, per transaction.

We hope that this additional application/renewal/payment option news is as exciting for you as it is for us. Please check our web site, or be sure we have your current email address, for the announcement of the launch date.

Englewood Health Department
73 South Van Brunt Street
Englewood, NJ 07631
Phone (201) 568-3450
www.cityofenglewood.org

FOOD FOR THOUGHT is a quarterly publication issued by the Englewood Health Department for food establishments in Englewood. Content contributed by Fausto Garcia, Jr. and Jennifer Galarza, Registered Environmental Health Specialists.

Fall 2013 Issue

Follow us on Facebook <https://www.facebook.com/#!/pages/City-of-Englewood-City-Hall/327177433429>

Or on Twitter @EnglewoodHealth

Food for Thought is not copyrighted. Any or all parts may be reproduced without permission. However, an acknowledgment of the source would be appreciated. Reference to any site on the Internet is provided as a service to Food for Thought readers and does not constitute or imply endorsement of these organizations or their programs by the Englewood Health Department. The Englewood Health Department is not responsible for the content of the pages found at these sites.
Deborah L. Baldwin, CMR, Editor.