

Cutting Board Safety

During recent inspections, many facilities have been marked for cutting boards that are grooved and pitted, and not easily cleanable.

Please take note that any surface used for cutting must be clean, smooth and free of damage.

Once a cutting board becomes grooved and pitted, it is impossible to properly sanitize the cutting surface.

The start of the new year is a perfect opportunity to take inventory of all of your cutting boards and assess which boards need to be repaired and which boards need to be replaced.



**For more information,
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Training Opportunities

Local Food Service Sanitation Managers
Certification (FSSMC) course
registration and information

Whiteside Area Career Center
1608 Fifth Ave., Sterling, IL 61081
(815)626-5810

Sauk Valley Community College
173 Illinois Rt. 2, Dixon, IL 61021
(815)288-5511 Ext. 273

Corporate Training Center, Ltd. courses
offered at Holiday Inn
2105 S. 1st Ave., Rock Falls, IL 61071
(800)705-8204

Black Hawk College Business And
Community Education Center
301 Avenue Of The Cities,
East Moline, IL 61244
(309)796-4823

Hammes Academics, Moline, IL
(217) 903-4306

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www.whitesidehealth.org**



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Establishments need sanitary facilities

A Moment In History...

In the early afternoon of January 31, 2003, the Health Department began receiving calls complaining of little or no water pressure at many food and drink establishments in Sterling. Most of the calls were from concerned business owners questioning what their options for business would be.

After speaking with a representative for Illinois American Water Company, the department learned that there was a major water main break that had not been located. It was assumed that the main break was due to the sub-zero temperatures, and every effort was being made to locate the break. The water company could not pinpoint exactly who would be affected by the break, and after inspectors did some calling around, it was determined that most food establishments in downtown Sterling were without water.

By late afternoon the break had impacted every food and drink establishment in town served by the supply to the point where they could no longer operate. The decision was then made to officially close every establishment connected to the public water supply. Within an hour depart-

ment staff had contacted every affected establishment telling them to close until pressure was restored, at which time they could reopen under boil order restrictions. Health Department staff then went to each permitted establishment to assure compliance.

Finishing up around 6:30 pm on a Friday night, the exodus of shoppers and diners from Sterling to Rock Falls was surreal. Both bridges were jammed with cars and downtown Sterling resembled a ghost town. It was clear to us then that this could not have happened at a worse time for establishments, considering the loss of business. Later that night, the break was discovered in an abandoned building and by morning pressure was restored to normal.

Fortunately, an event like this is rare. Typically, supply problems are only boil orders and only involve a few businesses.

The reasons for the law requiring pressurized hot and cold water are obvious. Without functioning sanitary facilities (hand washing, utensil washing, toilets that flush, etc.) establishments just cannot function safely. Although everyone was clearly frustrated, most understood the need to close.

How fast do bacteria really multiply?

Do you ever wonder how fast bacteria really multiply? At room temperature, bacteria, or microbes- the kind that spoil food and the kind that make people sick- can double in number every 20-30 minutes.

Imagine microbes the size of jelly beans. Now imagine that these five microbes are in an uniced bowl of potato salad on a buffet. Two hours later, the five jelly beans would have multiplied to where they would fill a one-gallon container. After another 20 minutes, the jelly beans would fill a two-gallon container. Add yet another 20 minutes and the jelly beans would fill a four-gallon container!

Consider these facts:

- "Spoilage" bacteria do not make people sick, but spoiled food usually means time or temperature abuse has occurred.
- Bacteria that make people sick are not easily identified. Even if present in high numbers, these bacteria give off no telltale smell, color, or other visible signs.

Some food borne pathogens can make people sick, even at very low numbers. Therefore, good temperature control (41 degrees or less) is very important to limit their multiplication.

Temperature logs valuable resource to ensure equipment functions properly

We would like to take this opportunity to remind facility owners and managers that temperature logs are required by this department for any coolers that hold potentially hazardous foods.

While many facilities are doing a good job of keeping logs, there are still some facilities that have not been keeping any records.

When used properly, and recorded regularly, temperature logs are not only useful to the inspectors that visit, but they are also a valuable resource for you, as an owner or manager, to ensure that your equipment is functioning properly.

If you aren't currently using temperature logs, now is the time to start.

You can make your own, ask your inspector for some, or call Whiteside County Health Department and have some mailed to you.

Remember, they are REQUIRED and they are readily available, so there is no excuse for not having them.