

## A Word from the Environmental Health Director

I hope you find the information in this newsletter educational. Our objective is for you to learn from this tool to better your practices for a safer Logan County. Many of you are knowledgeable of the information in this publication; however, others at your facility may find this information more useful. Therefore, we encourage you to read and share this information with your staff.

Since the last newsletter, I have taken on a new role as Public Health Administrator. With this new responsibility, I will plan to continue working closely with the environmental health personnel to provide the resources to help you succeed in the food sanitation arena. Other changes

have occurred over the past year such as State-required food handler training which is featured in this newsletter. As always we will continue to keep you updated via our newsletter and memos throughout the year to ensure you maintain compliance with new laws and food sanitation requirements.

Thanks for taking the time to review our newsletter. It's a pleasure to serve you and hope for a pleasant holiday season and good fortune in 2015.



## Planning to Renovate or Remodel?

The Logan County Department of (LCDPH) would like to remind you that if you plan to renovate or remodel your food establishment, you must **first** notify the department. It is required that before making any changes, you must complete a

plan review packet for review and approval by the LCDPH. You can pick up a plan review packet the LCDPH or access a printable version on the website at [lcdph.org](http://lcdph.org).



### Inside this issue:

A Word from the Environmental Health Director	1
Food Handler Training!	2
Keep Us Informed!	3
Handwashing Makes A Difference	3
Is This a Magic Glove?	4



## FOOD HANDLER TRAINING NOW REQUIRED

On August 27, 2013, an amendment, per SB1495, was added to the Food Handling Regulation Enforcement Act (410 ILCS 625) which requires any “restaurant” food handler working in the State of Illinois (who does not possess a valid Illinois Food Service Sanitation Manager Certificate or FSSMC) to complete a food handler training. A food handler is a food employee, as defined in the Illinois Food Service Sanitation Code, who works with unpackaged food, food equipment or utensils or food contact surfaces. Even a person working in a facility who is not a food handler on a regular basis, or who fills in when needed, must also have food handler training.

After January 1, 2015, restaurant facilities must be able to provide proof that all food handlers have received proper training and a certificate for each employee must be made available to the local health department inspector upon reasonable request. Therefore, it is important to make sure your employees (who are not food service sanitation manager certified) receive their training as soon as possible. Training must be accomplished within 30 days of employment.

To meet the need of food establishments, The Logan County Department of Public Health (LCDPH) is pleased to announce that food handler training courses are now being offered, as needed, to assist food establishments in meeting their need to have all food service workers trained. Depending on the demand, future training dates will be announced and food establishments will be notified. The cost per student is \$20. As another option, web-based ANSI-approved courses are also available through other educational resources.

The LCDPH sponsored food handler training class includes teaching through lecture, demonstrations, hands-on training and group interaction. In addition, this class will enable your employee(s) to gain first-hand food sanitation knowledge and a common sense approach to proper food handling from a professional regulator perspective. Upon completion of the class, students should possess a thorough understanding of all major aspects of sanitation and how to prepare food safely for your customers. Students who pass a post class assessment test will receive their certificates.

At this time, the food handler training is required for only restaurant workers. By Illinois Department of Public Health definition, a “restaurant” means any business that is primarily engaged in the sale of ready-to-eat food for immediate consumption. “Primarily” is defined as having sales of ready-to-eat food for immediate consumption comprising of at least 51% of total sales, excluding the sale of liquor. Food handlers working in “non-restaurant” facilities such as schools, daycares, nursing homes, hospitals and retail food stores will have until July 1, 2016 to complete their training.

If you would like to know more, log onto the state website at <http://www.idph.state.il.us> for additional food handler training information details. Once on the website, click on “F” on A-Z topics and go to Food, Drugs and Dairies. Under this section you will find the food handler training information.

If you have questions, please contact the Logan County Department of Public Health at 217-735-2317.

## HANDWASHING MAKES A DIFFERENCE!

Do you know that most foodborne outbreaks are caused by employees who do not properly wash hands prior to and during the handling of food. Remember to wash hands thoroughly and frequently. Hand washing prior to handling food is essential after such times as using the restroom, eating, drinking, cleaning, handling cash, trash, touching your face or skin, etc. In addition, always remember to wash your hands immediately before wearing gloves for food prep.

To adequately wash, use warm water, soap and paper towels (avoid cloth towels). While washing, rub hands together for at least 20 seconds. If in the restroom, it is required you turn the faucet off and turn door handle with the paper towel you used for hand drying. By practicing proper personal hygiene, you can make a difference!



### **KEEP US**

### **INFORMED!**

If you plan to sell (or close) your food establishment, the Logan County Department of Public Health (LCDPH) needs to be made aware of this. Consider this, if someone buys your food establishment without the LCDPH having knowledge, and the new owner of your “former establishment” creates a hazard which results in a foodborne outbreak, there’s always the possibility you could be considered accountable since the facility is still operating as a certified or licensed establishment by the LCDPH under your name and certificate.

It is imperative that you first notify the LCDPH in advance of an ownership change. This will help to assure that new ownership is following the proper food sanitation practices and licensing/certification procedures prior to commencement of operation. In addition, the new operator will receive a license/certificate under his/her name.

Furthermore, anybody purchasing an existing food establishment (or building a new establishment) must also first contact the LCDPH in advance of purchasing or building so a plan review and preliminary inspections can be conducted prior to opening.

Making the proper contact will help to assure new ownership is operating in compliance with the State of Illinois and Logan County regulations.

***Please use common sense and keep the LCDPH informed of any operational changes to your facility.*** The number to reach the LCDPH 217-735-2317. Your cooperation is greatly appreciated!



## IS THIS A MAGIC GLOVE?

It's stated in the Illinois Sanitation Code that if you must handle ready-to-eat foods, such as a sandwich, you must wear food grade disposable gloves. It's also stated in Section 750.512 that immediately prior to putting the gloves on, you must first wash your hands. This makes common sense considering if you put a glove on with dirty hands, you're contaminating the glove you will use to prepare a customer's meal.

Not only as an inspector, but also as a customer, I commonly see employees putting on gloves without first washing hands. This still commonly happens, and not just in Logan County. For example, it's common to see a worker go from the cash register to immediately putting on a glove for food preparation without first following the vital step of handwashing.

As I watch this, I start to ask myself many questions. Why is this? Is the glove magic? Is the glove incapable of causing contamination after being handled with dirty hands? What's going through the mind of the employee? If an employee is handling a glove with dirty hands, is this any different than handling my food with their unwashed bare hands?

After asking myself these questions, I begin to wonder why many food service workers universally don't follow the proper procedures? I don't believe a glove is magic. In reality, a glove should be no different than a hand, and like a hand, would actually be capable of becoming contaminated. Do employees not understand this? Do they lack common sense? Are they being adequately trained by management to wash hands immediately prior to wearing gloves?

Sometimes I realize asking myself these questions gets nothing accomplished. All I can do is continue to preach to employees and food service managers that you must first wash hands immediately prior to wearing gloves.

I do applaud those who understand this concept, follow it and preach it to their staff. To those that don't, I would ask yourself, would you want to eat food prepared with a "magic" glove or would you rather eat food that is prepared with a regular mortal food-grade glove that has been handled with a washed hand?

[www.lcdph.org](http://www.lcdph.org)