

Crisis Control Newsletter

Crisis Control Newsletter from RQA, Inc.—A Catlin Preferred Provider to Foodservice, Food Processing and Consumer Products Industries

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Be Safe, Don't Cross Contaminate!

September marks National Food Safety Month according to the National Restaurant Association Educational Foundation (NRAEF). National Food Safety Month was created in 1994 to heighten awareness of the importance of food safety education. Each year a new theme and free training activities and posters are created for the restaurant and foodservice industry to reinforce proper food safety practices and procedures. This year's theme **"Be Safe, Don't Cross Contaminate"** focuses on best practices to prevent the spread of pathogens from one food or surface to another. While this is written for the restaurant and foodservice industry, the food safety practices also apply to any food manufacturing environment.

Weekly training activity areas communicate concepts clearly and quickly to employees, and can be completed in less than 10 minutes. All the materials are based on the NRA's ServSafe® Food Safety program – a leading source of food safety training and certification for the restaurant industry. Each week's activity can be downloaded in English or Spanish from the NRAEF's website at http://www.foodsafetymonth.com/Activities. Here's a recap of this year's weekly activities:

1: Personal Hygiene Practices that Prevent Cross-Contamination
"Good personal hygiene is a key component to preventing cross-contamination and the spread of foodborne illness. Having the correct knowledge and attitude about personal hygiene will put you closer to keeping food safe."

2: Preventing Cross-Contamination Through Handwashing
"Every day our hands touch surfaces covered with pathogens that we cannot see. For this reason, handwashing is the most important part of personal hygiene. While it may seem basic, food handlers must wash their hands correctly and as often as needed to prevent the hands from becoming a vehicle for cross-contamination."

3: Cleaning and Sanitizing Practices That Will Prevent Cross-Contamination
"Without a clean and sanitized environment, pathogens can be quickly transferred to both cooked and uncooked food."

4: Preventing Cross-Contamination During Storage, Preparation, & Cooking
"Pathogens can move around easily in your operation. Cross-contamination can happen at almost any point in the flow of food. When you know how and where it can happen, it can be easier to prevent. The most basic way to prevent cross-contamination is to keep raw and ready-to-eat food away from each other."

5: Preventing Cross-Contact
"A food allergen is a naturally occurring protein in a food or ingredient that some people are sensitive to. When enough of an allergen is eaten, an allergic reaction can occur. You must make sure that allergens are not transferred from food containing an allergen to the food that is to be eaten. This is called cross-contact."

On-going training is an essential management responsibility to assure delivery of safe, high quality food. Why not make the most of the great, no cost resources provided by the NRAEF and re-energize your training efforts?

Sources: ® & ©2012 National Restaurant Association Educational Foundation (NRAEF)
By: Mary Ann Platt, Executive Vice President, RQA, Inc.

Bring National Safety Month to Life

September is the time not only to plan how you will promote National Food Safety Month, but how you can bring the 2012 theme of **"Be Safe, Don't Cross Contaminate"** to life in your operations.

For example, ideas offered by the National Restaurant Association Education Foundation include:

- Conduct food safety training for all employees.
- Ask each chef or manager to review the weekly activities with staff through contests or games and offer prizes to encourage participation.
- Promote NFSM in your operation's employee newsletter or magazine.
- Place the NFSM logo on all memos to employees, tabletops, check out stations, etc., to -emphasize to your customers.
- Promote NFSM on your website, blog, social media channels.

Why this theme? Of the top five risk factors identified by the CDC as most often responsible for foodborne illness outbreaks, dirty and/or contaminated utensils and equipment was number three. When food is being prepared, the presence of one or more of these risk factors dramatically increases the risk of a foodborne illness outbreak. If one of these risk factors is observed in a retail food facility, it constitutes a major violation and must be immediately corrected

A specific kind of contamination can occur when ready-to-eat foods come into contact with raw animal products or their juices, or between foods cooked to different temperatures. This is called cross-contamination. When preparing different kinds of foods, a employees must take care to ensure that ready-to-eat foods do not come into contact with raw animal products or anything else that raw animal products have touched without first being washed, rinsed, and sanitized. It is possible for cross contamination to occur due to contaminated utensils, food contact surfaces, and by unwashed hands. In a cooler, raw animal products or foods with a higher cooking temperature must be stored below and away from ready-to-eat foods to prevent any possible dripping or leaking from the raw food container.

It's easy to see why the prevention of cross contamination is critical to safe food handling practices. And don't forget to bring these safe food handling practices home!

Food and Drug Administration Recalls (www.fda.gov)

Product: White Mushrooms
Incident: Possible Health Risk– *Listeria monocytogenes*

A Lemington, Ontario, Canada grower/processor has issued a voluntary recall of their 8 oz. containers of sliced white mushrooms and is warning the public not to consume them because they may be contaminated with *Listeria monocytogenes*. *Listeria monocytogenes* can cause serious and sometimes fatal infections in young children, frail or elderly people, and others with weakened immune systems. The product was sold at a produce store in Temperance and Monroe, MI from August 10—12, 2012. So far there have been no reported illnesses associated with the consumption of these products. Consumers that have purchased the affected products should discard all 8 oz. containers of sliced white mushrooms and bring in their receipt for a complete refund. For more information, Consumers can call the company directly.
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Product: Fresh Cut Grilling Trays
Incident: Possible Health Risk–*Listeria monocytogenes*

A Lemington, Ontario, Canada firm has announced a voluntarily recall of a total of 1,402 cases and 8,412 individually distributed units of fresh cut grilling trays because they contain whole or sliced mushrooms which may be contaminated with *Listeria monocytogenes*. *Listeria monocytogenes* can cause serious and sometimes fatal infections in young children, frail or elderly people, and others with weakened immune systems. The recalled products were produced and distributed from Leamington, ON to retailers in the following states: MI, OH, IN IL and KY. This recall was issued due to finding *Listeria monocytogenes* in finished product that contained mushrooms. No illnesses have been reported in association with this recall. Consumers who have purchased these products should record the "Sell by" date and/or UPC code, immediately dispose of the product and contact the company to obtain a full refund. Consumers with further questions should contact the company for more details.

United States Department of Agriculture Recalls (www.usda.gov)

Product: Grilled Chicken Caesar Salad Kits
Incident: Possible Health Risk–*Salmonella*

A Vernon, CA establishment is recalling approximately 77,688 pounds of Grilled Chicken Caesar Salad kits. The salad kits include dressing made with cilantro that is the subject of a Food and Drug Administration (FDA) recall by a supplier due to possible *Salmonella* contamination. *Salmonella* can cause serious and sometimes fatal infections in young children, frail or elderly people, and others with weakened immune systems. So far, FSIS has not received any consumer complaints or reports of illness. The products subject to recall include 36 oz. trays of the salad kits and 18 lb. cases that contain eight 36 oz. trays of the kits. The products were produced between July 23 and August 6, 2012 and distributed to retail establishments in California. Consumers and media with questions should contact the company directly.

Product: Turkey Sausage with Cheddar Cheese
Incident: Possible Health Risk–*Foreign Materials*

A Sheboygan Falls, WI establishment is recalling approximately 48,000 pounds of Turkey Sausage with Cheddar Cheese products because they may contain pieces of gloves. The product was sold in 13.5 oz vacuum packages and was produced on May 22, 2012. The product was then distributed to retail establishments nationwide. The company alerted FSIS of the problem after receiving two consumer complaints. FSIS and the company have not received any reports of injury due to the consumption of this product. Individuals concerned about an injury should contact a physician immediately. FSIS will conduct recall effectiveness checks to verify the firm has notified all of its customers of the recall and that the proper steps are taken to make certain that the product is no longer available to consumers. Consumers and media with questions should contact the company directly.

Consumer Product Safety Commission Recalls (www.cpsc.gov)

Product: Gas Dryers
Incident: Hazard– *Fire*

A South Korea manufacturer in cooperation with the US CPSC is voluntarily recalling about 21,000 specific models of gas dryers. The gas valve in the recalled dryers can fail to shut off properly, continuing to heat the dryer and its contents after the drying cycle is complete. High temperatures inside and on the exterior surface of the dryers can scorch the drum, as well as burn or damage the dryer contents , posing a risk of burn, fire and smoke inhalation. The company has received over 141 consumer complaints about dryers continuing to heat after the cycle is complete. There were 3 reports of minor burns to hands or arms. Burnt or scorched clothing was reported in more than 50 incidents. The gas dryers were sold by various appliance stores nationwide from Nov. 2009—Aug. 2010. Consumers should turn off the gas supply and stop using the recalled dryers until repaired. For additional information, contact the company directly.

Product: Heated Mats
Incident: Hazard-*Fire and Electrical Shock*

.A Brooklyn, NY importer in cooperation with the US CPSC is recalling approximately 25 units of indoor pet heating comfort pad mats because the mats have poor wiring and construction, posing a fire and electrical shock hazard to consumers. The recalled mats are polyester, were sold in various shapes and sizes and have a white electrical cord. They mats were manufactured in China and sold in a variety of colors online from July 2011 through March 2012. The firm has received two reports of the mats catching on fire, including property damage. One fire involved the asphyxiation death of a dog. Consumers should immediately stop using the recalled pet mats and contact the company for a full refund. The firm is directly contacting consumers who have purchased the recalled product. For more information, consumers should contact the company directly.

Crisis Control is a newsletter jointly published by RQA, Inc. & Catlin Group.

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