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No Reservations

No Reservations **is a monthly newsletter published by RQA Inc. for the restaurant industry.**

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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.

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? Your employees and guests will thank you for it!

Bring National Food 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!

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Cafe, San Francisco, CA. August 2012

After San Francisco health inspectors found colonies of cockroaches at the restaurant this week, the longtime café had their permit suspended, the city's Department of Public Health's principal health inspector said Friday.

The café was closed when several health code violations, including a severe cockroach infestation, were discovered on the premises, the health inspector said.

A hearing was scheduled and the public health department will meet with the owner. At the meeting, an action plan will be established to remedy the problems and a date will be scheduled for re-inspection. "we want to hear why (the restaurant) let the situation get so bad and what they plan to do to resolve the problem." Other issues discovered at the café involved improper food handling and hand washing.

The inspector said they originally went to the restaurant on Tuesday to tell the operator that the business' water would be shut off in the following days by the Water Department.

By Wednesday the water was shut off, which normally would require the health department to close the business, but, according to the health inspector, the health department had already shuttered the café when cockroaches were found in cracks and crevices in the walls, and living in partitions. The health inspector said if inspectors notice two or more cockroaches, that is usually "cause for us to take a deeper look." The inspectors have photographs of colonies of cockroaches living in the restaurant. The health inspector stated that the restaurant has been in the neighborhood since the 1980s, but has changed owners about five years ago, and had never had issues "of this level" before.

The health department will give the owner advice on how to deal with the cockroach situation and how to go about "effective cleaning" and administering good pest control.

After the next inspection the restaurant must demonstrate they've addressed the violations or they will remain closed the health department said.

Source: http://www.ktvu.com

Sushi Restaurant, King County, WA. August 2012

The sushi restaurant was closed by the King County Health Department after officials allegedly discovered a series of health code violations.

According to a report from the health department, the following violations were found at the restaurant:

- Potentially hazardous foods at unsafe temperatures
- Inadequate facilities to control temperature of potentially hazardous food
- Poor personal hygiene practices
- Handwashing facilities unavailable
- Imminent health hazard: Suspected foodborne illness consistent with observed red critical violations

The restaurant is a chain of restaurants that serve sushi on conveyor belts in Oregon and Washington. The restaurant was re-opened four days after it was closed.

Source: http://redmond.patch.com

For more information about these topics and others, please contact:

Dan Cahill
RQA, Inc.
Phone: 602-331-9151
Email: d.cahill@rqa-inc.com

Please visit: www.rqa-inc.com

Insurance Contact:

Ian Hughes

Phone: 914-242-7812

Email: crisismanagement@catlin.com