

Food Safety News

Policy Updates and Reminders

- A new **Fee Schedule** will be effective January 1st, 2019 based on current CPI rate (fee schedule can be found at granthealth.org/fee-schedule).
- **Digital inspections are here!** Make sure to provide an email address with your renewal so inspection reports can be emailed to you as soon as inspections are complete.
- **REMINDER** – Failing a routine inspection requires a follow-up “reinspection”. Fees for re-inspections are billed to the food establishment at the rate of ½ the annual permit fee. **Failing a routine inspection happens when:**
 1. **26** or more **RED POINTS** are found, or
 2. Smoking/vaping is being allowed inside or within 25’, or
 3. An “**imminent health hazard**” exists (fire, flood, loss of hot water or loss of water service, sewage backup, foodborne illness outbreak, misuse of toxic or poisonous substance) (imminent health hazards also require immediate closure).



Top 5 Violations

- #1 = Valid Food Worker Cards (FWC)
- #2 = Cold Holding ($\leq 41^{\circ}\text{F}$)
- #3 = Adequate Handwashing Facilities—(soap, paper towels, warm water, easily accessible)
- #4 = Hot Holding ($\geq 135^{\circ}\text{F}$)
- #5 = Proper Cooling

Food Rescue! Guidance on Donating Food



Food establishments often want to donate food to hunger relief organizations—like food banks, food pantries, and meal programs—and for good reason! In addition to supporting your community and helping the one in eight Washingtonians that struggle with food insecurity, donating

food also reduces waste, saves money, and can be a tax benefit—as long as it is done safely.

Food can be donated if handled correctly, not previously served, and kept at proper temperatures. To donate food to a hunger relief organization, follow these simple steps:

1. Review your operation to identify the type and quantity of excess or unused food you prepare
2. Partner with local hunger relief organizations to find out what food they accept and plan pick-up or delivery time
3. Safely package (use food-grade containers labeled with source, common name & date) and maintain food at proper temperatures at all times.
4. Transport donated food safely in a clean, secure vehicle and use refrigerated transport when available. Depending on how far, coolers with ice work as well.
5. Track donated items by keeping records of type, quantity and date.

A food donation guide for food establishments, including a list of allowable foods, can be found on our website:

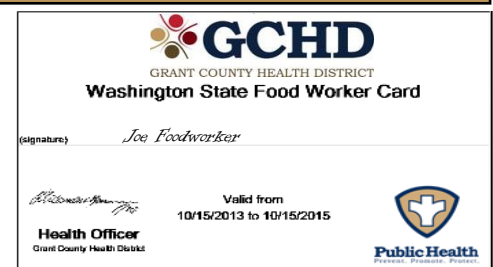
granthealth.org/environment/food-safety/food-safety-resources

Food Worker Cards can be obtained online at: www.foodworkercard.wa.gov

Or in person at: 1038 W Ivy, Moses Lake

Thursdays: 9 a.m. (English), 10 a.m. (Spanish)

Each food worker must have a **valid** FWC issued by a county in WA, with a Health Officer signature, and it should look like the one pictured below. Even food workers with ServSafe® certification need a valid FWC.



Meet Your Inspector—Office# 509-766-7960 (ext. and email below)



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Service Animal Update

Restaurant and grocery store managers will finally have some additional help keeping pets and other non-service animals out of their establishments thanks to a new law which is to become effective at the beginning of the year. House Bill 2822 concerning service animals was recently signed into legislation and is now [RCW 49.60.214](#)—effective January 1, 2019. The new law states that “a person who misrepresents an animal as a service animal commits a civil infraction” and “an enforcement officer may issue a notice of infraction if a person expressly or impliedly represents that an animal is a service animal in order to secure rights afforded to persons with a disability” (i.e. bringing the animal inside a food establish-

ment), “and knew or should have known that the animal did not meet the definition of service animal”. The **definition of a “service animal” is an animal that is trained for the purpose of assisting or accommodating a sensory, mental, or physical disability of a person with a disability**

In other words, **it’s now illegal to fake a service animal** in order to bring it into places where animals are not normally permitted. As a person-in-charge of a restaurant, grocery store, etc., you should be familiar with this law as it pertains to customers and the animals they may bring into your establishment. For more information about the new law, call your local law enforcement agency.

Food Code Rule Revision

The Washington State Retail Food (WAC 246-215), is currently in the process of rule revision. Our current code is based on the 2009 FDA Food Code, whereas the new food code, which is set to become effective in May 2020, will be based on the 2017 FDA Food Code. If you’d like to learn more about the rule revision process, give your inspector a call.

Large Norovirus Outbreak Sickens Over 500 People from Western WA Restaurant: Don’t Let it Happen to You!

Norovirus is a highly contagious virus that is persistent in the environment and spreads easily through food. It is most common during winter months and is often referred to as “stomach flu” but is not the same as the “flu” (influenza).

It causes severe vomiting and diarrhea, often at the same time. Some people also get fever, chills and headache. Symptoms last 1-3 days.

Norovirus is the leading cause of foodborne illness outbreaks.



In early 2018, a massive norovirus outbreak was investigated at two locations of a small restaurant chain in western WA—542 sick people were ultimately identified. The outbreak investigation began after the local health department received several illness complaints from customers. It was discovered that restaurant employees had worked while sick (symptomatic) during the time that the affected customers dined at the restaurant. Both restaurant locations were closed for several days to allow for thorough cleaning and sanitizing, and to let ill food workers get well. Recent news articles about the outbreak indicate that lawsuits against the restaurant are pending.

To Prevent the Spread of Norovirus...

- ✓ **Wash hands often**
- ✓ **Don’t work while sick**
- ✓ **Don’t touch ready-to-eat food with bare hands**
- ✓ **Have a clean-up plan for vomiting events**



Vaping and Marijuana Prevention Window Clings

GCHD’s Healthy Communities Division is currently distributing vaping and marijuana prevention window clings to expand our substance use prevention efforts. **Local businesses can play an important role in reducing vaping and marijuana use in the public eye by displaying these window clings on front doors/windows, and/or drive-through windows. By simply displaying these window clings, fewer customers will be exposed to secondhand smoke and a healthier environment will be encouraged.** The window clings available include a no vaping/smoking window label that states, “Thank you for not smoking or vaping” and a no marijuana window label that states, “It is illegal to use marijuana in view of the general public.”

On behalf of GCHD, thank you in advance for your partnership in helping to create a healthier environment. If you have questions or would like to request the window clings, please contact us at 509-766-7960.