

### CDC Food Safety Prevention Status Report

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) is often a name we see in relation to multi-state foodborne illness outbreaks. But their interest in the public health extends to many other issues besides food safety, including excessive alcohol use, prescription drug overdose, and healthcare-associated infections.

Earlier this year the agency issued its Prevention Status Reports (PSRs), which highlight – for all 50 states and the District of Columbia- the status of public health policies and practices designed to address 10 important public health issues. The PSR identifies those policies and practices which, if implemented, would reduce the health and economic impact of these 10 public health issues.

Below you will find highlights from the Food Safety PSR. It measures the status of certain practices and policies that can help states prevent or reduce foodborne illness risk.

Until this year, the food safety PSR focused on just two indicators that deal with DNA fingerprinting for cases of E. coli and Salmonella. In 2016, a third indicator was added: the state adoption of select Food and Drug Administration (FDA) Food Code provisions that are designed to prevent foodborne illness and outbreaks associated with restaurants and other retail food service establishments. Local, state, tribal, and federal regulators use the FDA Food Code as a model for their food safety rules and to be consistent with national regulatory policy.

The new indicator assesses whether or not states have adopted these four provisions from the 2013 FDA Food Code:

- Excluding ill food service staff from working until at least 24 hours after symptoms of vomiting and diarrhea have ended,
- Prohibiting bare hand contact with ready-to-eat foods,
- Requiring food service employees to wash their hands, and
- Requiring at least one employee in a food service establishment to be a certified food protection manager.

#### Ill Workers

Some foodborne illnesses, such as norovirus, can be transmitted after symptoms have ended. Food service employees who transmit their illness to others through food play a role in 46% of restaurant-associated outbreaks. Also, infected food workers cause around 70% of reported norovirus outbreaks from contaminated food.

#### Bare Hand Contact and Hand Washing

One of the best ways to prevent contamination of ready-to-eat foods (foods that will not be cooked) is through proper hand hygiene practices. Food service employees' bare hand contact is associated with 30% of restaurant-associated outbreaks. And, only about one-third of restaurant employees wash their hands when they should.\*

#### Food Protection Manager Certification

A growing body of evidence indicates that manager certification is related to

- Increased manager food safety knowledge
- Safer food preparation practices
- Better inspection scores, and
- Fewer foodborne illness outbreaks

According to the CDC, online certification costs around \$257 per person, while an outbreak can cost many times more than that. Out breaks can lead to loss of customers, sales, and reputation; negative media coverage; lawsuit and legal fees; and higher insurance premiums.

#### PSR Ratings

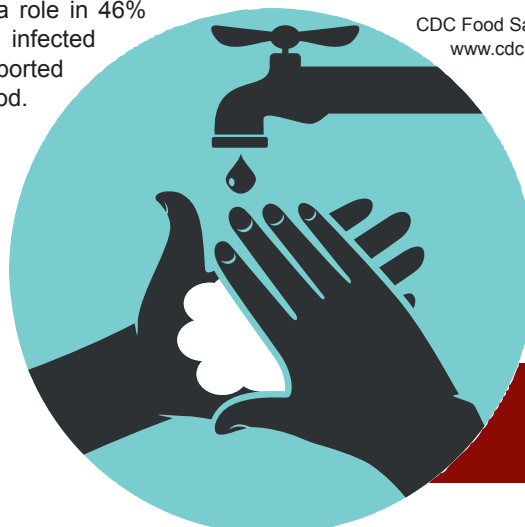
Analysis of this Food Code data shows that as of September 2014, all states have a provision in their regulations requiring handwashing. However,

- 37% do not have a provision excluding ill food handlers from working until at least 24 hours after symptoms have ended,
- 20% do not have a provision preventing bare hand contact with ready-to-eat foods, and
- 47% do not have a provision requiring food protection manager certification.

While all states are showing progress, there is room for improvement. The inclusion of the Food Code indicator in the PSR highlights the importance of the role of state food safety rules and regulations. You can learn more about the CDC's Prevention Status Reports (PSRs) and, in particular, the food safety PSR by visiting these websites:

CDC PSRs:  
[www.cdc.gov/psr/national-summary.html](http://www.cdc.gov/psr/national-summary.html)

CDC Food Safety PSR:  
[www.cdc.gov/nceh/ehs/news/features/2016/food-safety-psr.html](http://www.cdc.gov/nceh/ehs/news/features/2016/food-safety-psr.html)



*\*Patco Food Safety offers TOPfoam TerraGreen hand soap- this Green Seal® certified hand soap luxury foam disperses and cleans better. Enhanced with aloe vera and Vitamin E for a soft after-feel. Tropical floral fragrance smells clean and fresh.*

Source: "Journal of Environmental Health",  
Volume 79, No. 2

Ask the Expert: For any Food Safety or Sanitation questions or concerns, contact Linda Wilt via email - [LWilt@bhcinc.com](mailto:LWilt@bhcinc.com)