

REGS CORNER

Patco 
FOOD SAFETY

A learning tool to increase our knowledge of Food Safety best practices, as seen through the eyes of actual Health Department Food Safety Inspectors.

STANDARD: Proper date marking and disposition.

VIOLATION: Opened deli meats not being properly date marked for seven days.

CORRECTIVE ACTION: A shelf life of seven days begins with the day the product is opened. For example, a package of bologna that is opened on October 1st should be dated for sell/use by, or discard, on October 7th. Several pieces of opened lunchmeats were date-marked for eight days; they were opened on October 1st, and were dated for October 8th. Manager stated that they had been trained to add 7 to the date of opening, and that their scale which prints out the date stickers are programmed that way. The inspector agreed to contact the company's corporate office to inform them of the discrepancy in their date marking procedure.

STANDARD: Food contact surfaces cleaned and sanitized.

VIOLATION: Slime and mold accumulating in ice machine bin.

CORRECTIVE ACTION: Ice is considered a food; therefore, any surfaces that ice touches are food contact surfaces. The ice machine bin was observed with a pink slimy substance and a black mold buildup on the interior surfaces, causing the ice to become contaminated. Manager was advised to remove and discard the ice from the bin, and to wash and sanitize the surfaces, allowing it to air dry before making new ice. She was also advised to train staff to regularly check the inside of the bin for any soil buildup.

STANDARD: Food contact surfaces cleaned and sanitized.

VIOLATION: Deli slicers not being cleaned and sanitized at the required 4-hour intervals.

CORRECTIVE ACTION: Deli slicers are required to be broken down, and cleaned and sanitized at least once every four hours. The slicers were only being wiped down in place with a sanitizer and cloth every 2-3 hours. Manager was advised that the slicers must be disassembled and washed, rinsed and sanitized in the three-compartment sink at least every four hours.

STANDARD: Proper cold holding temperatures.

VIOLATION: Cold Time/Temperature Control for Safety (TCS) foods tested at 48-52°F.

CORRECTIVE ACTION: Cold TCS foods must be held at an internal temperature of 41°F. or below. Sliced lunchmeats stored in the top section of the sandwich prep station were not cold enough, testing at 48-52°F. They were not being held with Time as a control. Meats were stacked higher than the tops of the pans, preventing them from staying cold enough. Manager voluntarily discarded meats that tested at the high temperature. He was trained on how to store the meats correctly on the top of this refrigeration unit to maintain a correct temperature, and stated that he would train the deli staff in proper handling.

STANDARD: Insects, rodents, and animals not present.

VIOLATION: Numerous flies observed in salad bar prep area.

CORRECTIVE ACTION: Flies must not be permitted to congregate in a food service facility. They carry many disease organisms which can be transmitted to the food they land on. There was an accumulation of decaying food and debris on the floors and in drains, providing conditions favorable to insect breeding. Manager was advised to contact a licensed pest control operator, and to have the floors and drains cleaned and maintained to eliminate these conditions.

STANDARD: Non-food contact surfaces clean.

VIOLATION: Trash cans and adjacent walls in the food prep area dirty.

CORRECTIVE ACTION: Trash cans and walls in the food prep area were observed with an excessive buildup of dried-on food debris. This condition is an attractant to pests such as flies, ants, and roaches. Manager was advised to have the trash cans and walls thoroughly cleaned. She was also advised that any splashes or spills in this area should be cleaned as soon as possible*, and that they should be added to the Master Cleaning Schedule for a regular and thorough cleaning.

**Patco Food Safety offers Patco Citrus Scrub Degreaser. This non-abrasive and non-toxic cleaner works well on spray on/wipe off applications and requires no rinsing. It cleans heavy grease and soil from walls, countertops, appliance hoods, shelving, trash cans or any other non-food contact surfaces. It has a pleasant orange citrus fragrance.*

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

This issue's violations were all from Bucks County PA Health Department online inspection reports.