

2017 Annual Newsletter

I hope everyone had a great new year! I want to start by saying that these letters always contain important information that is critical for the employees on-site to know. If this letter is going to someone that is not overseeing daily tasks at the establishment such as a principal, branch manager, store owner, secretary etc., please make sure that your **ON-SITE** manager has a chance to read this letter, so that they can call and ask questions if needed. It is your job, as the person reading this, to make sure that it makes it to the correct individuals. When I show up on-site to do an inspection, and ask if they have seen the most recent newsletter, I should not be seeing blank stares in response to my question. Several managers have said that they have no clue what I am referring to when I ask about the newsletter. **THAT SHOULD NOT BE THE CASE.** This letter contains important information that every on-site manager and employee should know.

First off, there is a staff change regarding Brown County. Adams County will be taking over Brown Environmental Health as of January 17, 2017. Any questions or issues after that, please call 217-222-8440 X124.

Secondly, there are major changes taking place with the Illinois State Food Code. As some of you may know, Illinois recently adopted the 2013 FDA Model Food Code. By adopting this code, we are sure to stay up to date with the most recent science research about food safety. The FDA Code content is not much different than what is currently in the Illinois State Food Code. Food preparation, cooking, and sanitation processes will stay the same. The biggest change will be with the inspection form and procedures. With the FDA Code we will be using a comprehensive and uniform inspection process across the State of Illinois. This will ensure a more common language and consistency between local Health Departments. The biggest change is the inspection procedure; inspections will no longer be described as a “walk-through” or a simple structural inspection. The new inspection procedure will require:

- More dialogue with the facility operator, or person in charge (PIC). The PIC is the individual who is responsible for the operation at the time of inspection. The PIC must demonstrate knowledge of foodborne disease prevention, application of HACCP practice principles and requirements of the code.
- Vomiting and Diarrheal procedures. The establishment shall have procedures for employees to follow when responding to a vomiting or diarrheal event. The procedures shall address the specific actions the employee must take to minimize the exposure and spread of contamination.
- Handwashing signage is now a requirement in the establishment. A sign or poster that notifies food employees to wash their hands shall be provided at all handwashing sinks used by food employees and shall be clearly visible.

There are other minor changes that will be discussed on-site during inspection. To help with compliance, I have attached a list of example questions that the PIC will be expected to know. If he or she does not know the answer, then they must have a way of finding the answer. I have also attached two posters describing procedures for preventing and cleaning vomit and diarrheal events. Please

have these posters displayed for employees to see, so that the correct steps are taken if these events were to take place.

Next, I would like to discuss proper reheating methods. A common violation this year was improper reheating procedures. When reheating items, there are food safety measures to keep in mind:

- Reheat previously prepared food RAPIDLY to 165° or higher for at least 15 seconds before placing in a hot holding unit.
- After reaching 165°, reheated food can be held at 135° or above.
- Use proper equipment when reheating foods. A stove, microwave, or oven can be used to rapidly reheat.
- Do not use steam tables, crock-pots, or other hot holding equipment to reheat foods. These are used to keep food hot, not to reheat items.
- Never mix leftover food with fresh food.
- Never reheat previously prepared food more than once.
- Preparation time is when food is least protected. Improper reheating or hot holding procedures allow for survival and growth of bacteria that can cause illness.

Also, please make sure that all employees are aware of proper sanitizing methods. Every employee should know the steps required to manually wash, rinse and sanitize equipment and utensils, even if they are not a dishwasher. When I ask a worker, “what type of sanitizer do you use?” I should never hear the response “I don’t know”. Every worker should be educated on proper sanitizing procedures, and the importance of those practices.

It is the job of management to ensure that all their employees are trained on basic food safety practices. All employees should be able to answer these basic questions:

- What type of sanitizer do you use and what should the concentration be?
- What temperature should this food be held at?
- What is the required cooking temperature for this food?
- How often should you change gloves?
- When do you wash your hands?

Education is very important in food establishments. Educating our employees helps prevent food borne outbreaks. Make sure that your training process for new employees is effective. Management should always be reminding employees of basic hygiene and food safety practices daily.

If you have any questions about this letter, or the materials attached please call the Cass County Health Department at 217-452-3057 X310.

Food License Renewal applications will be sent out at the beginning of May. I will be sending them the same way you received this newsletter. If you want to change your email or mailing address, please let me know prior to May.

Food Classes for 2017

This is the food class schedule for Cass and Schuyler counties for 2017. All classes will be held in Cass County at the Virginia Health Department on 331 S Main Street.

I have also included the dates for Morgan and Adam County Food Service Sanitation classes. All classes are the same, so it does not matter which county you take the class in.

The state of Illinois has amended the course requirements for the Food Sanitation Manager Classes. After July 1st, 2014, there will be no more two day classes. Instead of two, eight hour classes with exam, you will only have to attend one, eight hour class, with the exam at the end of the class. As for the five hour Refresher Courses, they have amended these as well. There will no longer be Refresher Courses available. Before your expiration date of your license, you are required to attend the eight hour course, with exam. This means that even if you are renewing your license, or this is the first time you are getting your license, you will have to attend an eight hour course, followed by the exam. An exam is now required every time you renew your license. If you have any questions you can call the Cass County Health Department at (217)452-3057.

Cass County Health Department:

September 18th
October 23rd
November 20th
December 18th
All classes will be held from
8:30-4:30.

To enroll in any of the dates
above please call (217)793-
5136.

Morgan County Classes

Both days are 8:30-12:30
Test will be on 2nd day

Feb 21 & 28
March 20 & 27
May 8 & 15
July 10 & 17
August 14 & 21
September 11 & 18
October 16 & 23

To register please call Linda
Day at 217-245-5111

Adams County Classes

Day 1: 8:30am - 3:30pm,
One hour lunch on your own.

Day 2: 9:30am - 11:30am,
Exam is given on day two.

Feb 7 & 14
Mar 7 & 14
Apr 4 & 11
May 2 & 9
Jun 6 & 13
Jul 11 & 18
Aug 1 & 8
Sep 5 & 12
Oct 3 & 10
Nov 7 & 14

To register please call
217-222-8440