

# FOOD 4 THOUGHT

CITY OF MERIDEN, DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH & HUMAN SERVICES APRIL 2016

## NEWS

It's been a while since our last newsletter, but the Environmental Health Department's "Food for Thought" is back.

There's been some staff changes in our department since our last "Food for Thought" issue. Most of you have already met **Jill Stross**, our new health inspector. Also, **Rodney Delgado**; who has been trained in food service, but is currently focusing on lead issues.

## FOG (FATS, OILS AND GREASE)

Now that you have a grease trap that meets CT DEEP's regulations, it is important that those grease traps are properly maintained. As you are well aware, every Class 3 & 4 food service establishment has to have either a 1,000 gallon grease trap or an internal grease recovery unit(s). The following is a list of inspection items:



- Grease trap maintenance log
- Grease trap functioning properly
- Renderable grease container
- Prohibited chemicals used (no grease trap maintenance chemicals)
- Improper grease handling procedures
- Unauthorized equipment use/modification
- Improper equipment installation
- Excessive odors



It is important that the units are properly maintained so that grease is not discharged into the city sewer system as this can cause sewer back-ups. Meriden has seen a significant drop in the number of back-ups caused by grease since the new grease trap regulations went into effect. The program is working and it is up to you to keep it working by maintaining your grease trap in good working order.

If you have any questions about the maintenance of your grease trap or the inspection process of the grease trap, please contact the Water Pollution Control Facility (WPCF) at 203-630-4261.

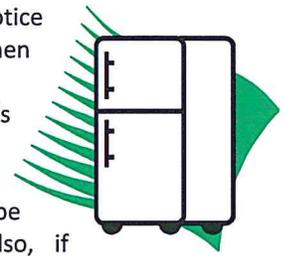
\*\* Please remember to dump your dirty mop water into your mop sink; or for those without a mop sink, your toilet and not a storm drain or out your back door.

## THERMOMETERS



A valuable topic worth revisiting with our food service establishments is refrigerator thermometers. Accurate thermometers are required in all refrigerators. Thermometers should be located in the warmest part of the unit (front/by door). The temperature inside refrigerators must be 45° F or less.

Food handlers should regularly check the temperature of the thermometers in their refrigerators. If you are proactive, you will notice quickly when your refrigerator is not working properly and may need to be repaired. Also, if



you notice the refrigerator is running a few degrees high, you can pull all potentially hazardous food out of the unit and put it into another unit. We should not be telling you that your refrigerator is not working and that all the potentially hazardous food needs to be discarded. During your food service inspection, you will not only be marked for the faulty refrigerator, but also for a temperature violation. This would be an automatic failure and would require a reinspection.

## HANDWASHING

The importance of handwashing is another topic to address in food service because a lack of proper handwashing is one of the leading causes of food borne illness. Handwashing is considered a 4-point "risk factor" violation and is #13 on the inspection form. Several examples of when hands should be washed are: after using the toilet room; after coughing, sneezing, smoking cigarettes, or eating/drinking; after handling money; when changing gloves; after touching bare human body parts.



Hands should be washed with warm running water and soap. Lather the soap on your hands, ensuring that hands are scrubbed

for at least 20 seconds (approximately the length of singing the "Happy Birthday" song two times). A hand sink should always be accessible and convenient to use. A hand sink should also never be used for anything other than hand washing.

### SANITIZERS

All equipment, kitchenware, food contact surfaces, and eating and drinking utensils should be washed, rinsed and sanitized after use. Sanitizing can take place in a high temperature dish machine, a chemical dish machine, or a 3-bay sink. Sanitizing is important and required to help make sure the equipment is as free as possible from microorganisms that cause foodborne illness.

When sanitizing in a 3-bay sink:

**Sanitizers can be either Quaternary Ammonium Compounds or Chlorine.**

When looking for a sanitizer, make sure it has an EPA registration number and mixing instructions for food contact surfaces. Also, make sure the chlorine product is scent free.

Use test strips to test the strength of the sanitizer. If the sanitizer is too strong, it leaves a toxic residue; if it is too weak, it is not effective. The strength of a chlorine sanitizer shall read 50 ppm-200 ppm. The strength of a Quaternary Ammonium sanitizer shall read 200 ppm-400 ppm.

### KEEP MERIDEN CLEAN

As part of the education and awareness process, we would like to familiarize you with **Meriden City Code Section 176-4D and 176-4E** which state:



*"Owners of any food establishment which sells food for consumption on premises or off premises is hereby required to keep the public walkways and roadways, driveways, yards, parking areas, work areas, including but not limited to loading and unloading areas, and lots adjacent thereto clean at all times and to place sweepings in a container to prevent rescattering within a radius of 200 feet. Pursuant to Connecticut General Statutes, Section 22a-226d(b), any police officer and any other person so authorized by the Chief Executive Officer may issue a citation to any person who commits a violation under this section. Each day a violation persists shall constitute a separate offense. This penalty shall be in addition to any civil penalties applicable under the Connecticut General Statutes, Section 22a-220a(i). Three citations in one year may result in the revocation of any permits, certifications and/or licenses issued by the City."*

Therefore, it is up to the food service establishment's owners/managers to control litter within a 200 foot radius around the property. During a routine inspection, sanitarians will check that the grounds around the establishment are being properly maintained.

We receive referrals from the Police, Housing, Fire Marshal's office, and other City Officials when they observe litter and debris. We also receive complaints from residents.

In an effort to help keep litter under control, it is recommended, especially for convenience

stores, to place a garbage can in the front of the store with a cover that has a small opening in the top. The small opening in the top is to prevent people from dumping large amounts of garbage in the container, while promoting people to throw their cans, wrappers and other single service type waste into the container.



Again, it is up to all of us to help keep Meriden litter free and thus improve our environment.

Remember we are just a phone call away....

**203-630-4226**



**Meriden Department of Health and Human Services**

**165 Miller Street**

**Meriden, CT 06450**

**203-630-4226**



Meriden Department of Health and Human Services



**Lea Crown, MPH**  
Director of Health

**Scott Bryden, R.S.**  
Environmental Health Administrator

**Carrie Buckley, R.S.**  
**Jennifer Henaire, R.S.**

**Jill Stross**  
**Rodney Delgado**  
Environmental Health Sanitarians

**Linda Tschupp, Environmental Secretary**