



# COMMUNITY RESOURCES AGENCY

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## FOOD NEWSLETTER

### ALTERNATIVE SANITIZERS

Some of you have expressed a dislike for the more common utensil sanitizers, such as quaternary ammonium, and chlorides and chlorines. Title 40 of the Code of Federal Regulations, Section 180.940, lists all the approved chemical sanitizers which may be used in a retail food facility, as allowed by the California Retail Food Code. A search on your computer will quickly pull up this list. An alternative to chemical sanitization is heat, also described in the California Retail Food Code (CRFC), Sections 114099.4 and 114099.6. For manual heat sanitization, section 114099.4 states, "...the sanitizing compartment of the sink shall be designed with an integral heating device that is capable of maintaining water at a temperature not less than 171F and provided with a rack or basket to allow complete immersion of equipment and utensils..." Per section 114099.6, the immersion time has to be at least 30 seconds. There are also high temperature warewashing machines (dishwashers) which accomplish the equivalent of this by raising the surface temperature of utensils to at least 160F. No other forms of sanitization are currently approved in California. As always, a method of confirming the level of sanitizer is required. This is done with what we commonly refer to as "sanitizer test strips", or a thermometer when using hot water in a sink compartment. When using a high temperature warewashing machine, an "irreversible registering temperature indicator" (a thermometer that can be run with utensils through the dishwasher and records the highest temperature reached, or single-use heat sensitive strips) are required per CRFC section 114099.7. As always, use a thermometer to confirm that the water in the wash compartment of the 3-compartment sink is at no less than 100F (or the temperature required by the detergent manufacturer) while utensils are being washed.

### Reminders...

Utensils are to be stored dry between use, not in water or sanitizer, and not tucked in uncleanable spaces between equipment. Wash, rinse, sanitize at the end of the day, or at least every 4 hours if in contact with PHFs; and when switching between foods. Air dry completely before using the utensil again. If you wipe your knife with a dry cloth between use, that cloth needs to be washed, rinsed, sanitized as often as the knife.

### Listeria monocytogenes



We often think that keeping our foods at the required 41F or below will keep us safe. Though generally true, *Listeria monocytogenes* can survive between 37F and 104F, and some research suggests *L. monocytogenes* can survive exposure to 170F. *L. monocytogenes* is associated with stillbirths, miscarriages, flu-like symptoms, and meningitis, as well as other illnesses. The time for the various symptoms to appear ranges from 1 day to 70 days. *L. monocytogenes* lives in the intestines of animals (including humans, birds, fish and shellfish), leafy greens, milk, and soil, and finds its way into our food. *L. monocytogenes* then infects humans through foods such as ready-to-eat deli meats, unpasteurized dairy products, smoked fish, and hot dogs, to name just a few. *L. monocytogenes* lives, multiplies, and thrives in refrigerator and air conditioner condensate, and in drains. Minimizing condensate accumulation can help reduce the risk of *L. monocytogenes*, as can keeping foods covered to prevent the possibility of any contact with condensate. Of the approximately 2,500 cases of listeriosis reported in the U.S. every year, about 500 end in death.

### Cleaning an Ice Machine

Be sure to wipe dry all areas that accumulate condensate, such as the ledge above the lid in the bin, and wipe these with a cloth lightly dampened with sanitizer (Caution: Chlorine may be corrosive on stainless steel). Facilities baking bread may need to do this more often because of the yeast in the air. Some ice machine manufacturers approve only specific cleaners, which also remove scale, and sanitizers. As with all food contact surfaces, the cleaning steps are: wash/remove scale, rinse, sanitize, and an additional step of rinsing the sanitizer off. Commercially made ice machine cleaners and sanitizers have warning labels regarding the mixing of these two chemicals. Be sure to also keep all air screens dust free.





## Reminders...

Fly paper is not approved. Any type of device to catch flies must enclose the fly. Fly lights are to be installed so as to have a clear drop to the floor, so that anything that falls out will fall onto the floor, not onto food or utensils.

Food areas are to be isolated from the outside, so keep doors closed and vermin out.



Get test strips. These are required.

Minimize bare hand contact with foods. Though CRFC allows it, CRFC also states that you are required to minimize it.

Read your sanitizer bottle for the required water temperature for optimum sanitization.

If you are planning on selling or remodeling, always call us first. Our permits are not transferable.



Store dishwasher racks off the floor.

Get your own copy of CRFC at [www.ccdeh.com](http://www.ccdeh.com) or just read it at [www.cdph.ca.gov](http://www.cdph.ca.gov)



## Thawing and Cooling

The California Retail Food Code is very specific in its requirements for thawing and cooling foods.

**Thawing** may be done in one of the following ways:

1. In a refrigerator. This may take over 24 hours.
2. In a microwave oven if immediately followed by immediate preparation.
3. As part of the cooking process.
4. Completely immersed in running cold (70F or less) water with enough force to rinse off loose particles down the drain. The food must be in a bowl, and completely unwrapped. This is to be done in a preparation sink (older facilities may have only a 3-comp sink to do this).



**Cooling** to 41F or below is to be accomplished within 4 hours if the food is prepared from ingredients at room temperature (e.g., canned tuna). If the food is hot (135F or above), it is to be cooled to 70F within 2 hours, and to 41F or below within the next 4 hours. This may be done by:

1. Placing the food in shallow pans and refrigerating.
2. Separating the food into smaller or thinner portions and refrigerating.
3. Adding ice to the food, and refrigerating.
4. Placing the food container in an ice bath while stirring the food (this will lower to 70F) then refrigerating.
5. Stirring the food with ice paddles or "chill sticks" (this will lower to 70F) then refrigerating.

When placing these warm foods in the refrigerator, allow for more space between them for better air circulation. Foods which are cooling may be uncovered (but otherwise protected from overhead contamination) or loosely covered.



## Warm Hands & Food Temperature Violations

Foods warm up when we slice them. Therefore, always refrigerate foods after handling them before placing them into a preparation refrigerator (also called a sandwich refrigerator). To help even more, make sure the insert that is being placed in the preparation refrigerator is also cold before placing it in the unit. Check that the temperature of the food is 41F or less as you are placing it into the preparation refrigerator. The same applies when using ice. Make sure the ice level meets the food level, and remember that metal containers transfer the cold better.

## CONGRATULATIONS!!!

The following facilities in our County have obtained permits from the California Department of Public Health (CDPH) or USDA/CDFA to become approved wholesalers, making it acceptable for a food facility to sell these facilities' permitted products:

Kelly's Natural and Organic Cookies  
(also USDA organic)  
Diestel's Turkey Ranch  
Barbara J Organics  
Shari's Cheesecakes  
Cover's Apple Ranch  
Devon's Delectables  
Fire Fall Coffee Roasting Company  
Katie's Hash Mash/Four Elements Food  
Donut Factory

Mother Lode Coffee Roasting Company  
The Good Stuff Salsa  
Bon Appetit – Crepes, Croissants & More  
Jamestown Olive Oil Company  
Sierra Olive Oil Company  
Alicia's Sugar Shack  
Stuffit Ravioli & Gnocchi  
Virginia's Vegan  
Brown's Coffee House & Sweets Saloon  
(Columbia Soda Works Sarsaparilla Soda)



Please let us know if we've left anyone out. We'll add them to our list. Thanks!

Interested in becoming a wholesaler or food processor? Please call the California Department of Public Health (CDPH) at (916) 650-6500.

## Please feel free to contact us:

Robert B. Kostlivy, Environmental Health Division Director  
Christy McKinnon, Sr. REHS                      Sheilah Lillie, Sr. REHS  
Rachelle Williams, Sr. REHS                      Beatrice Sardinias, Sr. REHS

We are at 48 West Yaney, Sonora, on the 4<sup>th</sup> floor. Our office hours are 8am to 3pm. We may be reached at (209) 533-5633. Our website is [www.tuolumnecounty.ca.gov](http://www.tuolumnecounty.ca.gov)

