

New Food Allergen Requirements

Remember: New Requirements

Go Into Effect in January 2017

Paul Andriacchi, R.E.H.S.,
Environmental Health Director

Public awareness of food allergens has become a very prevalent topic in recent years. The effects of food allergens are very significant in the United States. It is estimated that food allergies result in 30,000 emergency room visits, 2,000 hospitalizations and 150 deaths every year in this country.

In 2006, the Food Allergen Labeling and Consumer Protection Act was passed. This U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) law requires foods to have all the major allergens listed on the label of the food product. There are over 160 foods that can cause allergic reactions but the FDA has focused on the eight major food allergens that account for 90% of all food allergies in the United States. The eight foods are:

- milk
- eggs
- fish (e.g. flounder, bass and cod), crustacean shellfish (e.g. lobster, crab and shrimp)
- tree nuts (e.g. walnuts, almonds, pecans)
- peanuts
- wheat
- soy

The labeling requirement does not apply to food service or retail establishments. Therefore food items such as a food placed into a wrapper or container in response to a customer order does not have to be labeled.

Food allergens can bring about life-threatening allergic reactions in many people, therefore, proper training and awareness is critical for all food workers.

In Michigan, Public Act 516 of 2014 requires the certified food safety manager at all foodservice facilities to complete an allergens training and display an allergens poster. These new requirements go into effect in January 2017. The new allergen training is separate from the foodservice manager certification credential that is currently required. The class is available online through the Michigan Restaurant Association (MRA). The MRA is offering the class at a discounted rate of \$10 through an educational and training grant, but if you are a member of the MRA, the course is free.

To obtain further information from the MRA, call: 517-702-3941.



No Fly Zone!

Remember: Flies are more than a nuisance, they are a symptom of a bigger problem.

**Carrie Southern, R.S. ,
Environmental Health Sanitarian**

At this time of year, you may be serving more than customers at your food service establishment. It's common when the weather heats up that flies (fruit, drain, common house and other small insects) can cause infestations in your establishment.

Should a fly zone come upon your establishment, they can damage your reputation and potentially contaminate what's coming out of your kitchen. Flies can carry billions of microorganisms on and in their bodies. The way they eat their food is nasty. Flies can't eat solid food so they soften it up by vomiting on it. Then they stomp the vomit until it's a liquid, usually adding some microorganisms for taste. Then when it's good and runny, they suck it all back again, probably dropping some excrement at the same time. When they are done, it's your turn!

There is good news! You can manage these pests by taking several preventative measures which are part of an Integrated Pest Management (IPM) Program. Instead of always creating a "No Fly Zone" with chemical treatment, let's try using the following IPM approach to proactively control pests through sanitation, facility maintenance and other tactics:

- **BLOW THEM OUT.** Install air curtains above doors or a service window that blows a stream of air downward. The flies will not fly into the stream of air.

- **BOUNDARY LINES.** Installing two sets of doors adds an extra boundary line for flies to get through.
- **TAKE OUT THE TRASH.** Flies are attracted to your restaurant because of food odors. Clean and regularly empty garbage cans and recycle bins. Clean up any spills inside your kitchen or dining room immediately. Clean and sanitize drains and floors that can attract fruit and drain flies.
- **PROTECT THE OUTBACK.** Food odors can attract flies on the outside of your establishment too. Especially if you offer outdoor dining. Cover all trash cans and dumpsters with tightly sealed lids to prevent odors. Clear customer plates and glassware as quickly as possible. Wipe down tables after every serving and sweep away any standing water.
- **EXTRA DETAILS.** There are several small, but significant IPM tactics you can use to deter flies at your establishment. Caulk any cracks and crevices around the exterior of your building. Seal all doors and windows with weather stripping. Install tight fitting door sweeps. Install 16 mesh screening on all doors and windows that are open.

Flies are more than just a nuisance, they are a symptom of a greater problem inside your establishment. You must correct any issues at your establishment that may be attracting flies or allowing them to thrive. Work with a Pest Control Operator (PCO) to identify the type of flies plaguing your establishment and develop an IPM plan. By working together, you can keep flies from showing up and stealing a meal and your business!

Drinking Water Supplies at Food Service Establishments

Remember: Effective April 1, 2016, all facilities with an annual or semi-annual water sampling are being transitioned to quarterly sampling.

David Wagoner, Environmental Health Sanitarian

Food service establishments are serviced by a municipal water supply or a Type II Non-community water supply. For establishments that are serviced by a municipal water supply, it is important to know what to do in the event of a “boil water advisory” or other disruptions to the municipal water supply. If a disruption occurs, or a “boil water advisory” is issued, please refer to your Emergency Action Plans for Retail Food Establishments booklet. If you do not have one, you can download and print a copy at http://www.bhsj.org/eh/Food/MDA_EmergencyActionPlan_109428_7.pdf.

If your facility is serviced by a Type II Non-community water supply, it is important that you collect your required water samples at their required frequency, and submit sample results to the health department. Please remember that, as of April 1, 2016, all facilities that are serviced by a drinking water well are being transitioned to quarterly bacteriological water sampling if they had a prior sampling frequency of annual or semi-annual. If your current frequency is monthly, it will remain monthly.

Facilities are encouraged to be proactive, and check for any possible cross connections to the drinking water supply that could exist, and correct them to help prevent possible contamination to the drinking water supply. As always, if you have any questions about your drinking water supply, please contact your local sanitarian.

**Water is
Life... and
Clean Water
means
Health!**



Is That A Service Animal?

Remember: the facility operator is not allowed to require documentation proving that the dog is a service animal, or ask about the nature of the person's disability.

Joe Fraizer, R.E.H.S., Environmental Health Coordinator

In recent months our agency has noticed an increase in complaints and questions from the public and restaurant operators, alike, regarding service animals. The ADA (Americans with Disabilities Act) describes a service animal as:

“a dog that has been individually trained to do work or performs tasks for an individual with a disability.”

The task(s) performed by the dog must be directly related to the person's disability. The ADA also requires businesses and non-profit organizations that provide goods and services to the public to make reasonable accommodations in their policies, practices and/or procedures in regards to a service animal. For example, an individual that is blind may have a 'Seeing Eye' dog to help them navigate through their daily routines.

If a person visits a food establishment accompanied by an animal, the food facility operator should ask two questions:

Is the dog a service animal required for a disability?

and

What work or task has the dog been trained to perform?



Note: the facility operator is not allowed to require documentation proving that the dog is a service animal, or ask about the nature of the person's disability. However, there may be some visual cues that can help. Although service animals are not required under the ADA to wear a vest, I.D.'s or specific harnesses, the owner may have them wear these items when in public. Most importantly, the food service operator should remember to ask questions in such a way as not to offend or result in excluding someone that may have a disability.

It is very important for local restaurant operators to focus in on serving safe food. It is also important that local restaurants ensure that every member of the public has an opportunity to take advantage of all services that they have to offer. Remember to always be polite and to keep the lines of communication open. After all, good customer service is key to success!

“Ninety-two tri-county food service establishments, including restaurants, bars, catering kitchens and schools, received this year’s award. The establishments who were able to meet the stringent criteria are quite deserving of this honor.”

Paul Andriacchi, R.E.H.S., Environment Health Director,
Branch-Hillsdale-St. Joseph Community Health Agency.



Branch, Hillsdale and St. Joseph Counties

BRANCH COUNTY

Bronson

American Legion Memorial Post
Anderson Elementary School
Ryan Elementary School
St. Mary’s Assumption Church
Coldwater
Branch Area Career Center
Dearth Community Center
Branch Intermediate School District
Coldwater Hampton Inn
Great Lakes Health & Fitness
Jefferson Elementary School
Jimmy John’s
Lincoln Elementary School
Lincoln Learning Center
Max Larsen Elementary School
Pansophia Academy
Short’s Root Beer Drive-In
Taco Bell #4029
Willows Bar & Grill
Quincy
American Legion Rec. Club
Jennings Elementary School
Quincy Dairy Queen
Quincy Pizza
Union City
Union City Elementary School

Union City High School
Union City Middle School

HILLSDALE COUNTY

Camden

Camden Café

Hillsdale

Cavoni’s

Coffee Cup Diner

Community Action Agency

Davis Middle School

Day’s Inn Hillsdale

Gier School

Greenfield School

Hillsdale Hospital

Hillsdale County Senior

Service Center

Hillsdale Filling Station

Hillsdale Lodge BPO Elks #1575

Hillside Lanes

House of Pizza & BBQ

Palace Café

Pizza Hut

The Finish Line

Jonesville

Jonesville High School

Jonesville Middle School

Subway

Williams Elementary School

Litchfield

Litchfield Community Schools
Luigi’s Pizza

Pittsford

D & S Lounge

Pittsford Area Schools

Reading

Reading High School

Reading Pizza Barn

Reynolds Elementary School

Somerset

Freddie’s Freeze

Lil Peppi’s Pizza

Waldron

Waldron Area Schools

Waldron Friendly Tavern

ST. JOSEPH COUNTY

Burr Oak

Burr Oak Community Schools

Centreville

Centreville High School

Colon

Colon High School

Constantine

Constantine High School

Constantine Middle School

Eastside Elementary School

Riverside Elementary School

Sturgis

Amigo Center

Chicago Road Café

Congress School

Eastwood School

Jerolene Elementary School

Jimi Jo’s Ice Cream

Mike’s Pizza-Subs

Sturgis Adult Education

Sturgis High School

Sturgis Middle School

St. Joseph County Nutrition Project

Subway at Walmart

Subway OMP, Inc.

Taco Bell

Trinity Lutheran Church School

Wendy’s of Sturgis

Wenzel School

Mendon

Mendon Grade School

Three Rivers

Andrew Elementary School

LA’s Coffee Café

Norton Elementary

Park Community School

Ruth Hoppin Elementary School

Subway Sandwiches

Three Rivers High School

Twin County Community Probation Center

White Pigeon

Carl’s Catering

Mc Donald’s JLMAL LLC