

# Food Safety Scoop



Brought to you by the Yavapai County Food Safety Industry Council

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## Special Points of Interest

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## Spring is Around the Corner

The dark days of winter are getting shorter and shorter, springtime is on its way. What better way to bring in the daylight than by brightening up your eating establishment as well?

There are many areas of the establishment that may get neglected during the cold, dark winter months., customer areas, back of the house, chemical closet, storage areas, etc.

This issue of Food safety scoop is here to help you remember those forgotten places and get your restaurant clean and fresh again, just in time for spring.



This newsletter is brought to you by the Yavapai County Food Safety Industry Council, which is a joint collaboration between Yavapai County Community Health Services and the University of Arizona Cooperative Extension.

The FSIC meets bimonthly to discuss issues in the food service industry and ways to bring food safety information to the public.

For more information, please call 928-445-6590 ext. 227 or visit our website at: [extension.arizona.edu/yavapai/](http://extension.arizona.edu/yavapai/)

## Touching up Customer Areas

You may not pay much attention when you drive up to your eating establishment, but it is the first thing customers see. Is the parking lot clean and free of pot holes? Is there a garbage can by the entrance to keep it that way? Is the outside of the building covered with winter grime? Now is the time to get rid of that winter film.

Although usually located behind the establishment, customers may notice your dumpster or grease trap, visually or with their nose. Now is a good time to have them cleaned and serviced if need be. Not only will it look and smell better back there, but it will distract pests who will be coming out of hiding with the warmer weather.

Once inside, check out the walls and floors. Now is a great time to clean those

hard to reach places, scrub corners, professionally clean carpets and floor mats, clean around doors and window sills. Do you have tile floors? Grout can quickly become discolored and look dirty. Do a deep clean of grout lines and restore them to their original color.

When is the last time you have looked at the décor on your walls? How often do those picture frames and knickknacks get dusted? Do you have plaques or a Golden Plate award near the entrance? Make sure to keep them looking sharp as well.

Another area that customers will encounter are the bathrooms. According to a 2013 USA Today report, “some 50% of restaurant patrons who have a negative experi-

ence with a bathroom, will blab about it to friends and family.” A dirty bathroom can mean lost business and a bad reputation. Spring is the time to go beyond the day to day cleaning. Look at the tile and grout? Does it need a deep cleaning? Check out soap dispensers, paper towel holders and garbage cans. When is the last time they have been cleaned? Inspect the baby changing station to ensure they are being cleaned and sanitized and are secured to the wall properly. It may be time to have a refresher course on cleaning procedures for your employees as well.

Customers feel safe eating at a clean establishment and will be more likely to come back.



## Back of the House

Even in the cleanest kitchens, there are many areas that do not get cleaned as often as they should.

In order to work properly, fume hoods should be cleaned and serviced regularly. Clean the sides, behind and underneath fryers, grills and prep tables. If your equipment cannot be moved easily, it may have to be done during the night when it can be taken apart.

Drain line maintenance is another overlooked area in a busy kitchen. Gnats and harmful bacteria are just a couple of the problems associated with a dirty drain.

How clean is your ice machine? Is it time to drain it and clean and sanitize it? What about your can openers? They should be cleaned and sharpened regularly.

Refrigerator and freezer floors and shelves should be cleaned. Also be sure to check the vents for build up. They can be vacuumed out and the filters cleaned or changed. This can save on electricity bills as well as the life of your coolers.

If you have a bar in your establishment, how often do you clean the liquor shelves? Do not forget that often ignored bottom shelf!

While doing all of this cleaning and sanitizing, take a look at the chemicals you are using. Are they all stored in a safe, clean area away from all food items? Are all bottles clearly labeled? Do you have an updated MSDS (material safety data sheet) for each chemical in your establishment? Now is the time to double check that you are in compliance with OSHA regulations for all of your chemicals and update that MSDS binder.



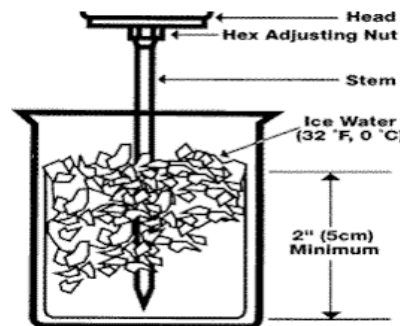
## How to Calibrate a Thermometer

A food thermometer is the most important tool in preventing food borne illness, however, if it is not working properly, it is useless. The good news is that it is easy and fun to calibrate a thermometer.

First, check that your thermometer has a calibration nut underneath the head. If so, it can be calibrated. Next, fill a glass with ice and water. Hold the thermometer so it is submerged below the ice but not

touching the sides or bottom of the glass. Wait 30 seconds and take a reading. It should read 32°F or 0°C. If it does not, use a wrench to turn the calibration nut to the correct temperature. You now have a calibrated thermometer!

Now you can use it to check other thermometers that cannot be calibrated. Set them side by side and see that they read the same temperature. Immediately replace



any thermometers that are not working properly. Train your employees to do this on a regular basis.

## Quiz

- Which of the following needs to be cleaned regularly?
  - Ice Machines
  - Fume Hoods
  - Can Openers
  - All of the Above
- What % of customers talk to friends about bad experiences in a restaurant bathroom?
  - 10%
  - 25%
  - 50%
  - 100%
- What is the best way to extend the life of your refrigerators or freezers?
  - Clean out the vents
  - Replace the filters
  - Turn them off at night
  - A and B
- True or False? All chemicals in your establishment must have a current MSDS sheet on file.
  - True
  - False
- What temperature should a properly calibrated thermometer read when submerged in ice water?
  - 0°F
  - 25°F
  - 32°F
  - 41°F
- True or False? Spring is around the corner.
  - True
  - False

Answers: 1. D 2. C 3. D 4. T 5. C 6. It may not seem like it in some parts of the county, but it is true!

Resources: 1. [betterbusiness.torkusa.com](http://betterbusiness.torkusa.com)  
 2. [blog.centralrestaurant.com](http://blog.centralrestaurant.com)  
 3. [tablechairsbarstools.com](http://tablechairsbarstools.com)

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