SERVING SAFE FOOD IN ALASKA
**Table of Contents**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Why read this book?</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Your own health comes first</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What makes people sick from food?</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Food temperatures</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Use wholesome food</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A clean workplace is safer</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Key points</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>First aid for choking</td>
<td>31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Endorsements</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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Upon request, the information in this booklet can be made available in alternative formats, such as large-print and audio tape.
WHY READ THIS BOOK?

Think about a restaurant where you recently ate or worked. Was the hot food hot and the cold food cold? Did the server have clean hands? Was there soap in the restroom? And paper towels? Was there trash on the floors? Was the table, equipment or counter clean? Your local environmental health agency notices these things because any place where food is prepared and served to the public must be kept safe. You, your friends and family are also the public, and should be interested in keeping a food business safe.

Why? Because people can get sick if food sits at room temperature, or if germs get into food or drinks. “Clean” is not the same as “safe.” Hands can look clean, but if they have germs on them, they are not safe. Food can smell good, but if there are germs in it that are like poison, it is not safe. This is why all food workers, like you, must learn how to prevent illness with safe food and food service. These safe habits will also help keep you and your family healthy.

When you have read this book, you will know how to:
1. Prevent food poisoning – that could make someone sick.
2. Keep food at safe temperatures.
3. Prevent contamination of foods.
4. Check where safe, clean foods come from and how to store them.
5. Clean and sanitize.

Food poisoning - illness caused from foods that have too many germs or unsafe things.

Contamination - When food has too many germs or unsafe things, it is contaminated. It is Unsafe.

Sanitize - kill germs with chemicals or high heat.
Your Local Environmental Health Agency has professional staff who protect the public's health. They do this by inspecting food businesses and by educating and testing workers who handle and prepare food.

This booklet is yours. Keep this where you work, and use it to remember to do safe food handling. If something comes up that you cannot answer with this book, ask your boss or call the your local environmental health agency listed in the back of this book.

Along the margins of this booklet is a glossary, a sort of dictionary. You will find many words and terms that explain safe food handling methods.
YOUR OWN HEALTH COMES FIRST

Wash your hands often when working with food and drink, this gets rid of germs that can make people sick.

Washing your hands well is one of the most important good health habits. It sounds too easy, but handwashing really works to wash away germs from your hands.

Remember to always wash your hands
• before you touch anything used to prepare food, and before you touch food that will not be cooked.
• after you work with raw meat, fish and poultry.
• after you handle trash and take out garbage.

The best way to wash your hands is:
1. Wet your hands with warm water.
2. Use soap.
3. Rub your hands briskly together to loosen any dirt and germs. Pay special attention to your fingernails where germs can hide. Take plenty of time - 20 seconds.
4. Rinse your hands under clean warm water,
5. Dry your hands on a paper towel or with an air dryer.

HANDWASHING IS VERY IMPORTANT

Poultry - Birds raised for meat. Chicken and turkey are the most common kinds of poultry; duck and goose are also sold for food.
It’s also **really** necessary to wash your hands

- **after** you go to the bathroom (use the toilet); both men and women must do this, and it is very important!

- **after** you eat.

- **after** you touch your face, hair, or body.

- **after** you blow your nose, after you cough or sneeze, because you must cover your mouth.

Wash your hands after your break; and if you smoke, wash your hands afterwards.

**Your kitchen should have a handwashing sink with hot water, soap and paper towels. Do not use your apron or dish towels to dry your hands.**

Germs, such as **bacteria** and **viruses**, grow easily, so think of your hands as always “contaminated.” Just because they look clean does not mean they are clean. Germs are too tiny to see with your eyes. If you do not wash your hands in the right way, your hands can put germs in food which gets eaten by your customers. They may then get sick from these germs. This is called **“food borne illness”** or “food poisoning.”
**WORK ONLY WHEN YOU ARE WELL**

Hepatitis A - a virus that causes liver disease. It spreads when someone has the virus in the feces (or poop). The viruses can get on hands, and then on to food that another person eats. This is one reason to wash your hands well after using the toilet!

**TAKE CARE OF HOW YOU LOOK AND HOW YOU ACT**

If you feel sick be sure and let your boss know. The germs you bring to work can spread when you sneeze and cough, and when you touch food, dishes, counters, utensils, forks, knives and spoons, pots, pans, and other people.

- Do not work if you have a cold, flu, a runny nose or sore throat.
- Do not work if you have loose bowels (diarrhea).
- Do not work if you are throwing up (vomiting).
- Do not work if you have Hepatitis A. Tell your boss; someone must tell the local environmental health agency right away.
- Do not work with foods if you have an infected cut, a burn or a sore on your hand. If the sore is not infected, cover it with a bandage and wear a rubber or plastic glove.
- If someone at home is sick, be sure to wash your hands carefully before you start work. Washing your hands at home will also help prevent the spread of illness there.

You want to **look clean** and **be clean** when you are at work. Your clothes must be clean, and your apron or uniform should be fresh.

As you know, it is not healthy to smoke or use any form of tobacco. **IF** you use tobacco, do not smoke or chew it while you are working or when you are near food or dishwashing areas. Smoke only while you are on a break. After you smoke, wash your hands with care before you return to work.

Keep your hair clean and neat. For your safety wear it close to your head, tied back, or in a net or under a hat.
WHAT MAKES PEOPLE SICK FROM FOOD?

People can get sick when the food they eat has germs. Germs cause food borne illness or food poisoning. Some foods are more likely than others to grow germs that cause food poisoning; these are called potentially hazardous foods. Germs grow easily in foods like meat, fish, poultry and milk; they grow fast in refried beans, cooked rice and baked potatoes. These are all foods that are moist or damp, and they have protein that the germs need to grow. Germs also grow well in other foods kept warm in the “Danger Zone.”

It is part of your job to protect the food to stop germs from growing, so that no one will get food poisoning.

• First, wash your hands well.
• Second, be sure that the food is wholesome and protect it from germs.
• Third, keep foods out of the danger zone.
There are different kinds of germs; bacteria are the most common. They are everywhere, they grow fast, and they may spoil food or cause food borne illness. Some bacteria make poison. Almost always the food looks and smells good, but it may have enough bacteria to make someone sick. (Two examples of this are potato salad that has not been kept cold enough, and chicken soup that has not been kept hot enough.) One kind of bacteria that you may hear about is **Salmonella**; it is not named for a fish; in fact it's not found in fish at all. It is in **dairy** foods, poultry and eggs, and it can cause very serious food poisoning.

A virus is another kind of germ that causes food poisoning; some viruses can travel through the air, in liquids and foods that a sick person touches. **Hepatitis A** is spread by a virus. Someone can have the virus and not know it. When a food worker with the virus does not wash her or his hands well after using the toilet, the virus is carried to the food the worker handles. This is one reason there is a law that all food workers **must** wash their hands.

**Parasites** are tiny worms or bugs that live in fish and meat. They die if they are frozen long enough or cooked long enough.

If you keep food very hot or very cold, out of the “Danger Zone,” germs will not grow.

Chemicals, such as rat bait or cleaners, can cause some food poisoning. You must be sure to keep all chemicals away from food.
When people get sick from food, they may feel like they want to throw up (nausea), they may throw up (vomit), they may have chills, cramps (pain in their belly), loose bowels (diarrhea), or they may have a fever.

Here is what you must do right away if you or a customer gets sick from food:

- Call your local environmental health agency.
- Save the food that may be causing the sickness. Do not serve that food. Do not throw out any food until the environmental health agency tells you to. Mark it clearly and put it in the refrigerator.

You should report all food borne illness to your local environmental health agency—those at work, at home, at church, on picnics. Someone from the environmental health agency will help you to find out how it happened, and how to prevent it in the future.

If someone needs first aid for choking, look on page 31 in the back of this book for what to do when this happens.
Food Temperatures

Temperature - The amount of heat or cold. There are two different ways to measure temperature. In this book when you see F, read "Fahrenheit, ("fair-n hite." That is the way the United States measures temperature; freezing equals 32° F and boiling water equals 212° F.

When you see C, read "Celsius," ("sell-see us,") or Centigrade." That is the way many countries measure temperature; freezing equals 0° C and boiling water equals 100° C. To change Fahrenheit to Celsius, subtract 32 from the Fahrenheit temperature and divide by 1.8. To convert from Celsius to Fahrenheit, multiply the Celsius degrees by 1.8 and add 32.

When you eat out you eat foods that are made by someone else. You trust them to make it safe for you to eat. Now you will be preparing food for other people, and they will trust you to do all that you can to keep them from getting sick.

You need to prepare the food carefully that you will serve or sell. You will wash raw vegetables; you will cook, cool, reheat, freeze and defrost food. You must keep germs that are already in the food from growing and causing food poisoning. Washing your hands carefully, and cooking and cooling foods the right way, are the most important things you can do to help keep your customers healthy. Be sure you understand this part, and do these things at work and at home. Your good habits will keep you, your customers and your family safe.
TEMPERATURE CONTROL

Calibrate your thermometer after using it with very hot or very cold foods, after dropping it, and on a regular basis.

• Stick sensing tip in a container of 50/50 water to ice.
• Make sure the tip does not touch the side or bottom of the container.
• Wait 4 or 5 minutes or until the needle is steady.
• Turn the nut under the dial until the needle reads 32°F (0°C).

THE "DANGER ZONE"

PREPARING FOOD

This section is about how to kill germs with heat during cooking and how to stop their growth by keeping the food hot or cold. This is called temperature control, and you need thermometers to check food temperatures. There are special thermometers to check foods; there are also special thermometers to check refrigerator temperatures.

Bacteria, or other germs, need time, food and moisture (or wetness) to grow; but they generally won’t grow when the temperature of the food is colder than 45°F (7°C) or hotter than 140°F (60°C). The temperatures in between 45°F and 140°F are in the “Danger Zone.” Keep potentially hazardous foods out of the “Danger Zone!” For example, when food is left in the “Danger Zone”, bacteria can grow fast, and make poisons that can make your customers and family very sick.

Wash your hands. Get the food to be fixed from storage, the stove, the cooler or freezer. Take a little at a time, and keep the rest hot or cold until you are ready to work with it. Prepare potentially hazardous foods just before you need them. Don’t let the temperature of the food stay in the “Danger Zone.”
Use a **metal stem thermometer** to check temperatures while cooking food to make sure that it gets done all the way inside. Different foods have to reach different degrees to be done or safe. The metal stem thermometer measures the inside, or internal, temperature of the food. A thermometer that works best shows a range of 0°F to 220°F (32°C to 104°C). The only way you can be sure that the food is cooked enough is to use a metal stem thermometer placed in the center of the food, even if you also use a **thermostat** to control the temperate in the oven.

Here are a few examples of potentially hazardous food and how hot they must be to be safe. They can be hotter, but they must be at least this hot to kill germs:

- Game, poultry and all stuffed meats: 165°F (74°C)
- Pork: 155°F (68°C)
- Beef, Lamb and Seafood: 145°F (63°C)
- Rare Beef: 130°F (54°C)
- Hamburger (ground beef): 155°F (68°C)
You must place the thermometer in the thickest part of the meat or in the center of the food to get a true reading. (Do not touch a bone with the stem of the thermometer.)

All game, poultry, all food made from poultry, all stuffed meats and the stuffing in them must reach 165° F or hotter to destroy Salmonella and other bacteria.

Hamburger (ground beef) must be cooked to 155° F. This includes all kinds of hamburger such as taco meat and meatloaf, as well as hamburger patties.

Pork and all foods made from pork must cook to at least 155° F to prevent trichinosis, a very serious illness.

Fish, seafood, all foods made with seafood, and all other meats, such as beef and lamb, must be cooked to 145° F or hotter to kill the bacteria that cause foodborne illness. Some people like rare beef, and this is the one meat that can be cooked to only 130° F if it is served right away. No raw meat is really safe to eat.

Never cook large roasts, turkeys or stuffed turkeys while they are still frozen. Their big size keeps the insides from cooking to a safe temperature. You must thaw them first so the heat can reach the center of the meat faster.

Microwave ovens do not cook evenly; you must stir and turn the food while it cooks to make sure it cooks to the same temperature in every part. Check the food with a metal stem thermometer before you serve it. (Do not keep the thermometer in the food while it is cooking in the microwave oven.)

**Stuffed meats** - Meat, poultry or fish that has a hole or is wrapped around a filling of soft food, like bread or rice mixed with liquids, then cooked together. Stuffed meats take longer to cook safely than unstuffed meats.

**Trichinosis** - A disease caused by eating a parasite, a worm, found in pork that is raw or undercooked. It causes pain, nausea, vomiting and diarrhea.
Between the time you cook the food and you put away the cooked food in a cooler or freezer, its temperature can fall into the "Danger Zone." This section is about the ways to keep it safe while it gets past the "Danger Zone." You will learn about how to keep cooked foods hot, **hot holding**, and how to reheat cold food. You will also learn how to get cooked foods cool, and how to keep food cold, **cold holding**. We begin with cooling hot food the right way.

**COOLING**

You always take a chance when you have to cool down food. The best way to have safe food is to make it fresh each day, just before you serve it. If you have food that is leftover or made in advance, you must cool it and store it safely. The first rule to remember about cooling: Cool hot food as fast as you can to below 45°F (7°C), past the "Danger Zone."

**Food that is not cooled fast enough is the Number One cause of food poisoning.**

**LABELING WHILE COOLING**

When placed in cooling or cold holding equipment, food containers in which food is being cooled must be clearly marked with the date and time the cooling process began.
Here are the six steps to cool solid and soft foods such as meats, refried beans, rice, potatoes, casseroles, stews, chili and thick soups or chowders:

1. Wash your hands.

2. Before you put away any food, you must place it in shallow metal pans, with the food no more than 4 inches deep. For very thick foods like refried beans or chowder, you must have the food no more than 2 inches deep.

3. Cut large roasts and turkeys into pieces no larger than 4 pounds.

4. Put all meats and other hot food in the cooler or refrigerator as quickly as you can, right away; do not let the food sit at room temperature for more than 30 minutes.

5. Do not stack pans; leave space for air to move around them.

6. Wait until the food has cooled to below 45°F before you cover it.

When you cool thin soup, sauces and gravy you can use shallow 4 inch metal pans, or you can use the ice and water method, an ice bath. Remember, you want the food to cool as fast as possible to below 45°F. For shallow pan cooling, quickly put the hot food in metal pans that are wide with low sides; the food must be no more than 4 inches deep. Do not cover the food until it has cooled to 45°F in the refrigerator. It may be hard to carry a shallow pan with thin soup in it. The ice bath method works well for this job. Here are nine steps you take to cool food with an ice bath:

1. Wash your hands.

2. Close the drain in a large sink. Place the pot in the sink.

3. Fill the sink with ice up to the level of food in the pot.
4. Add cold water to the ice.

5. Stir the soup or sauce often so that it cools all the way to the center.

6. Add more ice as the old ice melts.

7. Check the food temperature with the metal stem thermometer. (Clean the thermometer stem after each use.)

8. Be sure you have cooled the food from 140° F to under 70° F in less than 2 hours, and from 70° F to under 45° F in less than 4 additional hours.

9. Put the cooled foods into the refrigerator or freezer.

Each refrigeration unit, cold table or cooler must have its own thermometer that gives a true measure of how cold the air is, but you must also check the food with a metal stem thermometer. Air in the cooler must be able to move around the food, so the pans and dishes need to have space between them; do not crowd them.

For cold holding, do not let food stand at room temperature because that will allow germs to grow. Store foods in a refrigerator, refrigerated display case, in ice, or other approved method. Always cold hold foods at 45° F or less. Fish, shellfish, poultry, milk and red meat will stay fresh longer if you cold hold them below 40° F (4° C). However vacuum packed seafood products must be kept at 38° F (3° C) or below. Use the metal stem thermometer to check the food in cold holding, for example, in salad bars, areas where you prepare food, and in coolers. If you use ice to keep the food cold on a salad bar or food display, be sure that the ice comes up to the level of the food that is in the pan or dish. **Food must be colder than 45° F when you put it in the ice.** Cold hold foods at 45° F or less.
There are only three safe ways to thaw foods, and you must plan ahead to allow enough time to do it right:

1. Thaw food in the refrigerator; it may take a few hours or a few days. This is the best and safest way. Be sure to put meat in a container to catch the meat juices and to keep them from dripping on the food below. Placing thawing meat on a lower shelf is best.

2. Hold the food under cool, running water (not more than 70°F), never under warm or hot water.

3. In a microwave oven; you must then cook it or serve it right away.

Never thaw food at room temperature, on a counter or in warm water. These methods let harmful bacteria grow to high numbers (the “Danger Zone”).

You have learned about potentially hazardous food, and how the bacteria grow very easily in them. These foods must not be left at room temperature for even a short time. Foods like potato salad, pasta or macaroni salad, egg salad and chicken salad have to be cold enough to keep germs from growing. When you make these foods, start with cold ingredients.

Wash your hands before handling the salad ingredients.

Make cold salads with cold cooked foods such as potatoes, pasta, chicken and eggs; all ingredients should be chilled to 45°F.

If you wonder about keeping something cold, keep it cold while you check with a supervisor, the boss or your local environmental health agency.
After the food is cooked and ready to serve, keep it warm enough to stop any germs from growing. There is special equipment for this. You must turn on steam tables, soup warmers, and heated surfaces before you need them so that they will be hot enough when you put the cooked food into them. Set the temperature control a little above 140°F, and then check the food with your metal stem thermometer to make sure the food stays at least at 140°F at all times. Stir liquid foods (like soups and gravies) so they don’t get cold on top. Covers on the pans will help to keep the heat in and the food warm enough. Do not try to heat cold foods in these warmers. Hot hold food above 140°F.

Food that is cooked and then cooled may need to be heated again. When you must reheat food, do it very quickly (within one hour) to 165°F (74°C). The right way to do this is on the stove burners, or in microwave ovens, convection ovens, or double boilers. Do not use anything that will heat the food slowly, such as a steam table because it takes too long to pass the “Danger Zone.” Stir the food to be sure that a uniform temperature is reached throughout. Then use your metal stem thermometer to check the uniform temperature. Always reheat foods to 165°F.

When a customer leaves food on a plate or at the table, you must throw it away. If you have food like chips, rolls and bread and some of it is left over, you cannot serve it again. Unopened packages of crackers, jelly, candy or sugar may be served again.
If the electric power goes off, if the water supply is damaged, if there is no hot water, if the sewer or waste system backs up in the drains:

• Close the business right away.

• Call your local environmental health agency for help and advice.

If something goes wrong with the stove, the refrigerators, the freezers, the steam tables, salad bar or display coolers, any equipment that keeps the food safe to serve, you must think and act quickly:

• Be sure potentially hazardous hot foods stay hot (at least 140° F or more).

• Be sure potentially hazardous cold foods stay cold (at least 45° F or colder).

If a refrigerator does not work right, the temperature of the food in it can reach the “Danger Zone.” Before you move the food to another cooler check its temperature with the metal stem thermometer. If it is still colder than 45° F (7°C), move it quickly to a cooler or refrigerator that is OK.
If a freezer lets food thaw, check the food temperature with a metal stem thermometer. You can prepare the food, if it is still colder than 45° F.

If hot holding equipment like a steam table or soup warmer fails, measure the temperature of the food it was holding. If the food is still hotter than 140° F (60° C), you have two choices:

• Move the hot food to equipment that is OK and that will keep it hot.

• Cool the food quickly using shallow metal pans or an ice bath.

You must throw out food that has gotten warmer than 45° F or cooler than 140° F. Do not serve it and do not give it to staff, family or shelters. Call your local environmental health agency office for help and advice.
USE WHOLESOME FOOD

You want all the food in your **food operation** to be healthy and safe right from the start. This section talks about where the food comes from, how to check it, how to store it and how to handle it.

Use food that comes from sources that are approved by your local environment health agency - that’s the law. Look for “USDA” on meats. Look for “Pasteurized” on milk. Look for **certification** numbers on the package of shellfish. Canned foods, fresh foods and dairy products must come from companies, brokers or dairies that have been inspected and are clean.

You cannot sell food that has been prepared at someone’s home. Food for the public must be prepared in a kitchen approved for that purpose. People trained by your local environment health agency, inspectors, must check the kitchen to make sure you prepare and store the food in a safe way.

- Check the food as it comes in. It’s a good idea to write the date on it before you store it.
- Look for unsafe or **adulterated** foods. Moldy food, smelly meat, damaged or swollen cans are not safe to use. If you are not sure, get rid of it. Remember the rule: “If in doubt, throw it out.”
- Tell your boss about any bad food you find.

**Food Operation** - Includes all types of food services, Food processors, and markets.

**WHERE DID THAT FOOD COME FROM?**

- **Certification** - Legal proof that something has been inspected and approved as safe.

- **Adulterated** - Something unneeded has been added or has grown in the food to contaminate it.
• Keep all foods off of the floor.

• Rotate the stock by storing foods so you can use older food first. “First in, first out” is a good rule to follow.

• Cover, label and date dry foods.

• Store foods away from cleaners and poisons.

• Be careful about storing food in galvanized cans or other containers with metal coatings. (Some foods can “pull off” the metal and that can cause poisoning.) If plastic bags are used, they must be approved for food use.

Take special care of foods that go in the refrigerator or freezer.

• Store food in clean, safe containers that are labeled, unless the contents are readily identifiable.

• Check the temperature: Freezers need to be at least 0° F (-18° C).

• Put raw meat on the lowest shelf and unwashed food below clean cooked food.

• Refrigerators need to be 45° F (7° C) or colder. Dairy products and meat will keep longer at 40° F (4° C). Vacuum packed seafood must be kept at 38° F (3° C).

Remember the “Danger Zone” begins above 45° F. Be sure that thermometers give true temperatures in the refrigerators.

**Galvanized** - A steel container coated with the zinc, a metal that prevents rust.
As a food handler you must prevent **cross contamination**. Cross contamination happens when germs from raw or unclean foods get into foods that are ready to serve or that will not be cooked again before you serve them. Here are some important ways that you can prevent cross contamination:

- In the refrigerator: Don’t let raw meat, fish or poultry drip onto foods that will not be cooked before serving.
- Wash your hands between handling raw meat and foods that will not be cooked before eating.
- Store raw meat, fish, and poultry on the lower shelves of the refrigerator.
- Never store foods that will not be cooked before serving in the same container as raw meat, fish, or poultry.
- Use a hard cutting surface or a board, with no splits or holes where germs can collect. It is easier to really clean that kind of surface well.
- Wash, rinse, and sanitize the cutting surface and all the utensils and knives **every** time you finish cutting raw meat, fish, or poultry.
• Wash your hands before handling food.
• Wash, rinse, and sanitize the cutting surface and all the utensils and knives every time you finish with a job or between preparing different foods.
• Use utensils to mix food. If you must use your hands, wash them carefully.
• Use a clean spoon or fork to taste food and do not reuse it unless you clean and sanitize it.
• Store bulk foods in covered bins and containers.
• You and customers should use utensils with bulk foods. Tongs and scoops work well.

Chemicals that you add to food as you prepare it are food additives. You cannot add sulfiting agents to food at a market or food service. In the state of Alaska there is a law against adding these chemicals at the retail level. You cannot use ingredients for freshening or whitening if they contain sulfiting agents.

Some people are allergic to sulfites. Employees in food service should learn what menu items have sulfites, so they can tell their customers who ask.

If anyone complains about getting sick from food additives, you or your supervisor must report it to your local environmental health agency.
A CLEAN WORKPLACE IS SAFER

It takes more than soap and water to keep a food business clean and safe. It also takes chemicals and care to use them the right way. You want to be safe and you want to get the job done in a safe way for your customers. Some of the chemicals you will need are detergents, sanitizers and pesticides. These help stop germs dead in their tracks.

• Know what the directions say for using chemicals. Read the labels and talk to your boss about when to use them and how much to use. Be sure you really understand the directions!

• Keep all chemicals away from food. You must put them below food, never on a shelf above food, or above any area where you fix food.

• Can you tell what the labels say? Are they easy to see? They must be. If they are not, tell the boss. Mark them clearly with ink that lasts.

• Keep all chemicals in the bottles or boxes they come in. If you put them in a different container, label them clearly.

Detergents - Cleaning powders and liquids that work like soap, but are made in a different way; they have chemicals in them that are not in soap.

THESE ARE VERY IMPORTANT RULES:

Sanitizers - Very strong chemicals that kill germs. A good sanitizer is chlorine bleach.

Pesticides - “Cide” means kill. These chemicals kill pests.
• Use **wiping cloths** to clean countertops, tables, cutting boards and equipment. Rinse the wiping cloth in a sanitizing water mix of 1 Tablespoon bleach and one gallon of water; do not add soap to this mix. (If you use another kind of sanitizing mix, be sure it is approved by your local environmental health agency.) Change the sanitizing mix often; do not let it become dirty.

• Clean and sanitize whenever there is a chance of cross contamination. Sanitize at the start and end of the work day. Clean during your shift as soon as you see a spill.

• Wash, rinse and sanitize each surface that touches food, for example a meat slicer or grinder and cutting boards. Sanitize equipment after each use. Follow the directions on the equipment so that you can get into all the spaces where germs can grow.

Dishes, utensils and equipment that touch food must be washed in five steps. This is the **only** way you can wash dishes by hand. You must **wash, rinse and sanitize** them in a three sink unit. These are the five steps for the right way to wash dishes by hand:

1. Scrape leftover food and grease from the dishes and throw it away.
2. In the **first sink**, wash the dishes with clean hot water and detergent.
3. In the **second sink**, rinse them with clean warm water.
4. In the **third sink**, sanitize the dishes to destroy bacteria. Sanitizers may be chlorine bleach or other chemicals approved by your local environmental health agency. For example, use one teaspoon of bleach for each gallon of warm water in the sink.
5. Air dry the dishes and utensils. Do not use a towel to dry them.
Your business may have a commercial dishwasher. This dishwasher will wash, rinse, and sanitize dishes, equipment, and utensils. There are 3 steps you must use to wash dishes by machine:

1. Scrape leftover food and grease from the dishes and throw it away. Pre-rinse, if required.

2. Load dishes into the machine and run the full cycle.

3. Air dry the dishes and utensils. Do not use a towel to dry them.

A commercial dishwasher either uses a sanitizing chemical, or very hot water in the final rinse. Throughout the day, check to make sure the wash and rinse temperatures are in the range required for your dishwasher and that containers of detergents, sanitizers, and other additives are full. If a sanitizing chemical is used, monitor its concentration with test strips. Wash your hands before handling clean dishes, equipment, and utensils. At the end of the day, clean the dishwasher and check the spray holes and traps to remove bits of food.

Now that everything is clean and dry, put them away in storage areas that are also clean and dry. This will protect them from contamination. Keep equipment and utensils off of the floor, away from drains, water lines and open stairs. Put things away carefully and quickly; do not let them sit on counters and tables where they will be handled and moved around.

Cups and glasses should be put away upside down on clean surfaces. When you pick them up again, do not touch the rims. When you put away eating utensils (forks, spoons and knives), touch only the handles, and protect the parts that contact food.
A good habit to practice at work and at home is to handle utensils, dishes and glassware as little as possible to prevent the transfer of germs.

Utensils that are in continuous use may be stored in a running water dipperwell, in hot water (140° F or above), in ice water, or in the food with the handle sticking out of the food.

Or, they can be stored clean and dry between uses.

There should be a daily schedule for cleaning so that no area is forgotten. Complete cleaning of walls, ceilings, and mopping and sweeping of floors should be done when there is the least amount of food around, such as after closing or between busy times. However, you should clean work surfaces, tables, and equipment as they are used. Cleaning as you go will help reduce the chance for cross contamination. You and the other employees will be safer too if everything is kept clean and in the proper place.

After cleaning, wash your hands before handling food.
PESTS

Cockroaches, flies, weevils, mice and rats are some of the pests that can get into a food business. Don’t let them in, and don’t let them eat.

Some of the ways to keep pests out is to clean the entire place often on a regular schedule. Use screendoors, and cover small holes where mice and rats can get in. Cover garbage with lids that fit well and remove garbage often. Keep the areas around garbage containers clear of trash and litter.

If pests become a real problem, a licensed pest control service may need to help solve it. If food workers have to use pesticides, be very careful with them. Pesticides are poison that kill rodents and insects, but they can also poison humans. Read the directions on the can or box; or have your boss read them to all of the staff. Be sure you understand how to use pesticides. (See p. 24 about storing chemicals.)

Before using pesticides, put away all food, and cover the work surfaces. Be sure that the pesticides you use are approved for use by food workers. Let your local environmental health agency help you deal with pest control questions.
KEY POINTS

All of the information you have learned to become a food and beverage worker will help you and your family stay healthy too. Take this time to review the key ideas.

1. Wash your hands often, and wash them well.

2. Work only when you are healthy, not when you are sick.

3. Prevent food poisoning by keeping food out of the “Danger Zone,” the temperatures in between 45° F and 140° F.

4. Cook foods until they are “done” and have reached the required temperatures.

5. Keep food safe from cross contamination with careful storage and sanitizing.

6. Store chemicals for cleaning and pest control away from food, utensils and equipment.

7. Keep your workplace clean and safe. This will help keep you safe and well.
You may see a problem at work and when you check this book you learn the right way to manage it. You will have to decide what to do next. You have some choices.

- You can take action yourself to correct it.
- You can tell your boss about it, and together you can take steps to correct it. If the problem continues, you and the boss can call your local environmental health agency to help figure out a way to solve the problem. Remember, a problem is easier to fix in the beginning before it grows too big and expensive. The health of your customers, the staff and yourself is the most important factor to think about. Don't ignore the problem.

If you need more copies of this book to keep at work, contact your local environmental health agency for them.
FIRST AID FOR CHOKING

1. Ask: Are you choking?

2. If a victim cannot breathe, cough or speak...

3. Make eye contact with another employee or patron and tell them to call 911 or the local emergency number.

4. Give the Heimlich Maneuver.
   - Stand behind the victim.
   - Wrap your arms around the victim’s waist.
   - Make a fist with one hand. Place your fist (thumbside) against the victim’s stomach in the midline just above the navel and well below the rib margin.
   - Grasp your fist with your other hand.
   - Press into stomach with a quick, upward thrust.

5. Repeat thrust if necessary.
ENDORSEMENTS

This manual is adopted for use in the state of Alaska and endorsed by:

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32
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