



HEALTH CARE AGENCY/PUBLIC HEALTH ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH INFORMATIONAL BULLETIN

TO: Orange County Retail Food Facility Owners/Operators

SUBJECT: Requirements for the Sanitizing of Food Contact Surfaces and Utensils

The California Retail Food Code (CRFC) establishes structural and operational requirements for all food facilities operating in California. Included in this law are requirements for the sanitizing of food contact surfaces and utensils. The sanitizing procedures outlined in CRFC are intended to reduce the number of foodborne illnesses associated with cross-contamination of food contact surfaces and utensils, by disease-causing microorganisms such as Salmonella enteritidis. These requirements mandate that food contact surfaces and utensils be cleaned **and sanitized** between certain food processing steps where cross-contamination may occur. The purpose of this Bulletin is to inform you of these provisions of the law and to assist you in complying with them.

Section 114117 of CRFC states in part, *“Equipment food contact surfaces and utensils shall be cleaned and sanitized as follows:*

- *Each time there is a change in processing between types of animal products except when products are handled in the following order: any cooked ready-to-eat products first; raw beef and lamb products second; raw fish products third; and raw pork or poultry products last.*
- *Each time there is a change from working with raw foods of animal origin to working with ready-to-eat foods.*
- *Between uses with raw fruits or vegetables and with potentially hazardous food.*
- *Before each use of a food temperature measuring device.*
- *At any time during the food handling operation when contamination may have occurred.*
- *Except as provided below, if used with potentially hazardous food, equipment food contact surfaces and utensils shall be cleaned (and sanitized) throughout the day at least every four hours.*
- *Food contact surfaces in a refrigerated room shall be cleaned at a frequency that corresponds to the temperature in the following chart and this information shall be documented for review by this agency.*

Temperature	Cleaning Frequency
41°F or less	24 hours
>41°F – 45°F	20 hours
>45°F – 50°F	16 hours
>50°F – 55°F	10 hours

- *Equipment food contact surfaces and utensils may be cleaned (and sanitized) less frequently than every four hours if the enforcement agency approves the cleaning schedule* utilized based on a consideration of the following factors:*
 - *Characteristics of the equipment and its use.*
 - *The type of food involved.*
 - *The amount of food residue accumulation.*
 - *The temperature at which the food is maintained during the operation and the potential for the rapid and progressive growth of infectious or toxigenic microorganisms that may cause food infections or food intoxications.”*

*(Note: Prior to this Agency granting a variance from the four hour time requirement, a written proposal must be submitted by you, the owner/operator, explaining how compliance with this section will be achieved.)

During the normal course of inspections, the Environmental Health Specialist may require you to substantiate compliance with the sanitizing requirements for food contact surfaces and utensils. Some ways of demonstrating compliance would be through the use of written cleaning protocols and maintenance schedules. For more detailed information on sanitizer concentration requirements and alternate sanitizing methods, refer to Environmental Health’s Informational Bulletin on “Requirements for Manual Sanitization and Alternate Sanitizing Methods”.

If you have any questions regarding the requirements for the sanitizing of food contact surfaces and utensils, please contact your Environmental Health Specialist at (714) 433-6000.