

# Food for Thought: An Update for Food Operators

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City of Milwaukee Health Department | Consumer Environmental Health Division  
841 N. Broadway, Room 304 | Milwaukee, WI 53202 | (414) 286-3674 | [www.milwaukee.gov/health](http://www.milwaukee.gov/health)

## IT IS TIME TO RENEW YOUR LICENSE AND UPDATE YOUR CONTACT DATA Avoid Late Fee

Fees may be:

- Paid by credit card (Visa or MasterCard)
- Paid by check or money order to: Milwaukee Health Department
- Paid electronically at:  
[www.milwaukee.gov/payfee](http://www.milwaukee.gov/payfee)
- Paid in person at the City of Milwaukee Health Department between 8:00 a.m. and 4:15 p.m. Mon. through Fri.

**Note: Please include the \$25 late payment fee for all payments made after the date due on the invoice. Payments are not accepted by inspectors in the field.**

### How can we reach you?

It may be necessary from time to time for the City of Milwaukee Health Department (MHD) to provide you with vital, time sensitive information via fax or email (i.e., if an outbreak or some other food related emergency is occurring). Do we have your **correct** fax and e-mail information? Please add or update this information on the enclosed payment request.

## INSPECTIONS ON THE WEB

Milwaukee will soon be joining other programs across the country by making restaurant inspection data available to the public online. In addition to the public's interest for having this information, we hope that you also will find it useful for tracking your compliance with outstanding orders as well as comparing inspection results with previous inspections. The recent implementation of our new electronic inspection system enables the MHD to easily share inspection results with the public on-line.

Prior to the development of the website, the Consumer Environmental Health Division met with the Wisconsin Restaurant and Grocers Associations to share information and get their feedback regarding the posting of inspection records.

The site includes information about the inspection program and explanations of the report(s). Our website currently contains information for consumers and for food service operations, and provides many resources. Check it out by going to [www.milwaukee.gov/health](http://www.milwaukee.gov/health) and following the links to food safety, inspections and licensing.

## ELECTRONIC INSPECTION SYSTEM

Last fall, the MHD Consumer Environmental Health Division began piloting an electronic inspection system and the system went into full use this spring. Many establishments have already had an inspection done using the electronic system.

The electronic inspection report system requires inspectors to document specific areas as being in compliance, out of compliance, not applicable, or not observed. This is based on recommendations from the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) and makes the data more statistically significant.

Having inspections recorded electronically will help the MHD keep better track of the number of inspections done and the types of violations found during inspections. We are able to use this information in many ways, including reporting to the State Departments of Health and Agriculture. We also can use this information to determine training efforts for both inspectors and establishments.



Tom Barrett, Mayor  
Bevan K. Baker,  
Commissioner of Health

[www.milwaukee.gov/health](http://www.milwaukee.gov/health)

## A L E R T! - A NEW FDA INITIATIVE

Preparedness against foreign and domestic attacks has become a permanent fixture in today's society, and the food service industry is no exception. For this reason, the FDA has set in motion the ALERT initiative. This program is intended to raise the awareness of the food industry regarding food defense. ALERT is a simple way to remember to take the most important steps in ensuring that the food you serve is safe from intentional contamination.

### A L E R T – EXPLAINED (ASSURE, LOOK, EMPLOYEES, REPORTS, THREAT)

- ✓ How do you **ASSURE** that the products and ingredients that you use or carry are safe and come from secure sources? You should know who your suppliers are and what actions they take to ensure food security.
- ✓ How do you **LOOK** after the security of products in your facility? Have a defined system for handling and tracking products in your control.
- ✓ What do you know about your **EMPLOYEES** and other people coming in and out of your facility? Conduct background checks on employees, know who does and does not belong in your facility and prevent customer access to critical areas.
- ✓ Could you provide **REPORTS** about the security of your products? Evaluate your food defense program at least annually and document your findings. Most importantly, take action to correct shortcomings or areas that need improvement.
- ✓ What would you do and whom would you call if there were a **THREAT** or incident at your establishment? The most important step to take is to hold any and all product that may have been affected by the threat and call the FDA 24-hour emergency number at (301) 443-1240 and/or your local health department.

As operators of food establishments, it is important that you take steps to address food defense in your establishment. Reviewing the concepts of the A L E R T initiative with your employees and taking action to implement the program can accomplish this.

For more detailed information, visit:  
[www.cfsan.fda.gov/alert](http://www.cfsan.fda.gov/alert).

## IS YOUR BAKERY FROM A LICENSED SOURCE?

On occasion, our inspectors find bakery products in grocery stores and gas stations that do not appear to be from a licensed source. The products are ordered off sale if store managers or employees are not able to provide information that verifies a licensed source of the products.

The Wisconsin Food Code requires that food be obtained from sources that comply with all laws related to food safety and food labeling. Furthermore, the code states that food prepared in a private home may not be used or offered for human consumption in a food establishment.

If someone approaches your business wishing to provide you with bakery for sale, be sure to ask for proof that the bakery is from a licensed establishment.

Bakery can make you sick. The City of Madison Health Department recently investigated two Norovirus outbreaks that led inspectors to cake and glazed donuts as the source of the illness.

## HOW TO GET THE FOOD CODE AND OTHER INFORMATION

Our website: [www.milwaukee.gov/health](http://www.milwaukee.gov/health) has links to the Wisconsin Food Code and Food Code Fact Sheets. Our site also has information on temporary food stands, farmer's markets, mobile food operations, opening a food business, plan review, weighing and measuring devices, tattoo and body piercing and more.

The City of Milwaukee Health Department in its capacity as an employer and service provider does not discriminate on the basis of age, race, religion, color, gender, national origin, arrest or conviction record, sexual orientation, marital status, disability, political belief or affiliation, or military participation. Persons needing disability assistance information, language assistance, or interpreter services please call 414-286-3524 or (TTY) 414-286-2025. Discrimination claims may be filed with the Department's Equal Opportunity Coordinator by calling 414-286-2359.