



## MINIMUM STANDARDS FOR FOOD ESTABLISHMENTS

This handout is a guideline provided for persons interested in opening a food establishment within the limits of Denton County FWSD 1-A. It is our intention that this information be utilized by architects, contractors, builders, and owners so that new and remodeling construction may fully meet the State Health Codes. These are Health Inspections requirements only. These requirements are to be used in addition to requirements of other DCFWSD 1-A departments and divisions, and are not to be interpreted as replacing other Department's requirements in any way.

**NEW BUSINESS? TAKING OVER AN EXISTING BUSINESS? MAKING CHANGES?** Please contact Health & Food Safety at (972) 899-4000 or e-mail [health@Dentoncountyfwsd.com](mailto:health@Dentoncountyfwsd.com). An inspection is required prior to opening. A permit will be issued when all requirements are met.

### **FLOORS**

**FLOOR CONSTRUCTION** - Floors and floor coverings of all food preparation, food storage, and utensil-washing areas, walk-in refrigeration units, dressing rooms, locker rooms and toilet rooms and shall be constructed of smooth durable material such as terrazzo, ceramic or quarry tile, with a six-inch covered tile base and shall be maintained in good repair. Covered tile base must be installed integral with and flush with floor tiles. Top set covered tile base is not permitted. Epoxy resin and other poured monolithic flooring or seamless flooring systems may be used in these areas installed to a finished product thickness of a minimum of one-quarter (1/4, 0.25) inch with 6 inch covered base monolithic, integral and flush with floor. Additional requirements such as addition of non-tile flooring approved products may be subject to additional requirements such as addition of non-skid additives. Durable grades of sheet vinyl may be used in dry storage areas and shall be maintained in good repair. Nothing in this rule shall prohibit the use of anti-slip floor covering in areas where necessary for safety reasons.

**FLOOR DRAINS** - At least one floor drain shall be provided, with total number subject to approval. Properly installed, trapped floor drains shall be provided in floors that are water flushed for cleaning or that receive discharge of water or other fluid waste from equipment or in areas where pressure spray methods for cleaning equipment are used. Properly trapped floor drains are required in all restrooms and in food preparation areas. Such floors shall comply with construction requirements and shall be graded to drain.

### **INTERIOR**

**WALLS AND CEILINGS** - Walls in areas where food is not packaged at all times shall be nonabsorbent, easily cleanable and covering must be approved. Food preparation, storage, and utensil-washing areas must be durable, nonabsorbent and easily cleanable floor-to-ceiling. FRP, stainless and ceramic tile are approved wall finishes. Walls in toilet rooms provided for worker use shall be durable, nonabsorbent and easily cleanable to a minimum of 48 inches. Wall coatings such as epoxy paint may be used only in non-food areas and must be approved prior to installation. Concrete, concrete blocks, or bricks may be used only in non-food areas such as can washing areas and outdoor janitorial or storage areas. Ceiling construction in all areas except dry storage shall be easily cleanable and nonabsorbent. Ceiling coatings, including epoxy paint, are not approved as ceiling coverings in areas where uncovered food is located, stored, transferred, processed, passed, cooked, prepared or sold, except in areas such as bars, temporary buffet lines and other areas where approved.

**LIGHTING - General.** At least fifty (50) foot-candies of light shall be provided to all working surfaces (employees working with food or working with utensils or equipment such as knives, slicers, grinders or saws where employee safety is a factor). At least twenty (20) foot-candles of light shall be provided to all other surfaces and equipment in food preparation, utensil-washing, and hand washing areas, toilet rooms, self-service buffets and salad bars, reach-in and under-counter refrigerators. At least ten (10) foot candles of light at a distance of thirty (30) inches from the floor shall be provided in walk-in refrigeration units and dry food storage areas and in other areas and rooms during periods of cleaning. All light fixtures in food areas must be shatterproof or shielded.

## **PLUMBING**

**GENERAL** - Plumbing shall be sized, installed, and maintained according to law. There shall be no cross-connection between the potable water supply and any non-potable or questionable water supply or any source of pollution through which the potable water supply might become contaminated.

**NONPOTABLE WATER SYSTEMS** - Not permitted.

**BACKFLOW** - Devices shall be installed to protect against backflow and back siphonage at all fixtures and equipment where an air gap at least twice the diameter of the water supply inlet is not provided between the water supply inlet and the fixture's flood level rim. A hose shall not be attached to a faucet unless a backflow prevention device is installed.

**GREASE TRAPS, GREASE INTERCEPTORS** – Required unless otherwise approved. A grease trap or grease interceptor shall be located to be easily accessible for cleaning. Grease interceptors shall not be located inside the food establishment unless an enclosed area separated from all food service is approved. Test wells/ports must be permanently identified. Location and sizing must be approved. Grease interceptors/traps shall be sized based on the 2015 IPC (International Plumbing Code) sizing criteria.

**WATER HEATERS** – Must be sized per NSF/FDA guidelines. Sizing calculations should reflect temperature rise of at least 70 degrees F.

**GARBAGE GRINDERS, DISPOSALS** – Call the Building Inspections Division at 972.899-4000 for discharge requirements per job.

**FIXTURES** - Depending on type of establishment, the number of fixtures will be determined by Health Inspections. All food service fixtures must be able to reach 100 degrees minimum, except 3-compartment sink shall reach minimum 110 degrees. Generally, a minimum of one, one (1) 3-compartment sink with drainboards, one (1) curbed mop cleaning facility (mop sink), one (1) food prep sink with at least one (1) drainboard and a minimum of one (1) hand wash sink will be required. Handwash facilities shall be located:

(A). to allow convenient use by employees in all food preparation, dispensing and warewashing areas; and

(B). in, or immediately adjacent to, toilet rooms; and

(C). such that at least one (1) shall be on each cook line, for direct use by all employees while working on the cook line; and

(D). within every twenty-five (25) linear feet of unobstructed space in food preparation and utensil washing areas, or as otherwise approved by the regulatory authority.

Any door, wall, partial wall, stairway or other barrier, fixed or moveable, shall be considered an obstruction for the purposes of these rules.

## **WAREWASHING AND SANITIZING**

**MANUAL** - One three-compartment sink minimum is required. A three-compartment sink shall be used if washing, rinsing and sanitizing of utensils and equipment is done manually. Sinks shall be large enough to permit the complete immersion of the utensils and equipment and each compartment shall be supplied with hot and cold potable running water. Suitable equipment shall be made available to aid in the washing, rinsing and sanitizing process. Two (2) drain boards shall be available in conjunction with the 3-compartment sink unless otherwise approved. Proper handling of soiled utensils prior to washing and proper handling of cleaned utensils following sanitizing shall be maintained.

**MECHANICAL** - (Dishwashing machines) If a mechanical, warewashing machine is provided, this does not allow for exemption from the requirement of at least one three-compartment sink. Cleaning and sanitizing may be done by spray-type or immersion dishwashing machines or by any other type of machine or device if it is demonstrated that it thoroughly cleans and sanitizes equipment and utensils. These machines shall be operated in accordance with manufacturer's instructions, and utensils and equipment placed in the machine shall be exposed to all dishwashing cycles. Automatic dispensers, wetting agent dispensers, and liquid sanitizer injectors, if any, shall be properly installed and maintained.

## **VENTILATION HOODS/FIRE SUPPRESSION EQUIPMENT**

Ventilation hoods and devices shall be designed to prevent grease or condensation from collecting on walls and ceilings, and from dripping into food or onto food-contact surfaces. Filters or other grease extracting equipment shall be readily removable for cleaning and replacement if not designed to be cleaned in place. Hoods will be required for the equipment that they serve. In general, residential-type hoods or re-circulating air hoods will not be allowed in commercial establishments, regardless of the type of establishment.

Fire suppression equipment in the hood may be required. The Building Inspections Division approve hood installation type requirements, respectively. Please call the Denton County Fire Marshals Office at (940) 349-2840 for separate submittal requirements deemed necessary by the Fire Department regarding commercial submittals such as fire suppression or sprinkler systems.

Type II hoods shall be installed where cooking or dishwashing appliances produce heat or steam and do not produce grease or smoke. Examples area: steamers, kettles, pasta cookers and dishwashing machines.

Type I hoods shall be installed where cooking appliances produce grease or smoke, such as occurs with griddles, fryers, broilers, ovens, ranges and wok ranges.

## **LAUNDRY FACILITIES**

Laundry facilities on the premise or a food establishment shall be used only for the washing and drying of items used in the operation of the establishment. Separate rooms shall be provided for laundry facilities except that such operations may be conducted in storage rooms containing only packaged foods or packaged single-service articles.

## **INSECT AND RODENT CONTROL**

**GENERAL** - Effective measures intended to minimize the presence of rodents, flies, cockroaches, and other insects and rodents on the premises shall be utilized. The premises shall be kept in such condition as to prevent the harborage or feeding of insects or rodents. Pest control devices, such as "bug zappers" or fly paper may not be placed in such as manner that they pose a risk of food contamination.

**OPENINGS** - Openings to the outside shall be effectively protected against the entrance of pests including rodents. Tight-fitting, self-closing doors with door sweeps, closed windows, screening, controlled air currents, or other means shall be utilized. Screening material shall not be less than sixteen (16) mesh to the inch.

## **MANAGEMENT AND PERSONNEL**

**RESPONSIBILITY, ASSIGNMENT** - The permit holder shall be the person in charge or shall designate a person in charge and shall ensure that a person in charge is present at the food establishment during all hours of operation. There shall be one (1) person on duty during all hours of operation that has completed a course to become a Certified Food Protection Manager as defined and accredited by the Texas Department of State Health Services. The person in charge is responsible for ensuring that all food employees are properly trained in food safety as it relates to their assigned duties.

## **FOOD EQUIPMENT**

**CERTIFICATION, CLASSIFICATION, ACCEPTABILITY** - Food equipment that is certified or classified for sanitation by an American National Standards Institute (ANSI) - accredited certification program (such as NSF, ETL-sanitation or UL- sanitation certifications) will be deemed to comply with current standards. All approved equipment must be used as manufacturer intended. Equipment labeled "For House Use Only", such as crock pot-type equipment, "George Foreman" grills, and electric skillets may not be used. Approved ventilation hood and fire suppression equipment must be provided in compliance with the Mechanical Code adopted and amended by Denton County FWSD 1-A.

## **FOOD STORAGE**

Food must be protected from contamination. Food may not be stored in locker rooms, toilet rooms, dressing rooms, garbage rooms, dumpster enclosures, mechanical rooms, under sewer lines that are not shielded to intercept potential drips, under leaking water lines, including leaking automatic fire sprinkler heads, or under lines on which water has condensed, under open stairwells or open building structural elements, or under other sources of contamination. Shelving must be impervious and easily cleanable.

## **FOOD PROTECTION**

Sneeze guards meeting NSF Standard 2 shall be used wherever contamination by the consumer is possible. On the average, the area of concern is the vertical distance from the customer's mouth to the floor. It is required that the vertical distance of 4'6" to 5'0" be protected.

## **GARBAGE AND REFUSE**

Outdoor storage surface for refuse, recyclables, and returnables shall be constructed concrete and shall be smooth, durable and sloped to drain. Outdoor enclosures shall be constructed of durable and cleanable materials and shall be approved by Building Inspections and shall adhere to all appropriate Building codes and restrictions. Outdoor dumpster enclosure is mandatory and shall be constructed of one hundred (100) percent masonry. Please obtain a dumpster enclosure specification sheet from the Building Inspections Division. Grease containers awaiting pick up or service, if not located in a sanitary container within the establishment, must be located within the dumpster enclosure protected by bollards and easily accessible for servicing.

## **OUTDOOR AREAS**

Walking and driving areas shall be surfaced with concrete. Asphalt is prohibited. Contact Building Inspections for specifications at 972-899-4000 or e-mail to [inspections@dentoncountyfwsd.com](mailto:inspections@dentoncountyfwsd.com).

## **SIGNAGE**

- A sign must be posted at each hand washing lavatory including employee restroom facilities stating "Employees Must Wash Hands Before Returning to Work".
- Manual and mechanical sanitizing instructions must be posted at the respective location.

Any person or entity desiring to operate a food establishment must make written application for a permit on forms provided by the Denton County FWSD 1-A Health Inspections located at, 2540 King Arthur Suite 220. Renewals of permits are required on an annual basis, except where otherwise stated.

Prior to an approval of a Food Establishment Permit, Health & Food Safety shall inspect the proposed food establishment to determine compliance with the current State Health Requirements as adopted with all local amendments. This is done prior to establishment occupancy. No food preparation or food shall be approved prior to issuance of a Food Establishment Permit.

- For any questions please contact:

(972) 899-4000 or via email to  
[customerservice@dentoncountyfwsd.com](mailto:customerservice@dentoncountyfwsd.com)