

Top 5 Food Establishment Inspection Violations

TIPS FOR PREVENTION

To help prevent the types of inspection violations most frequently seen in retail food establishments, we analyzed data from local health departments across the nation and aggregated it into a list of the **Top 5 Violations in the U.S.** We then enlisted food safety expert Dr. Hal King, Managing Partner of Active Food Safety, to provide advice on **how establishments can best prevent those violations.**



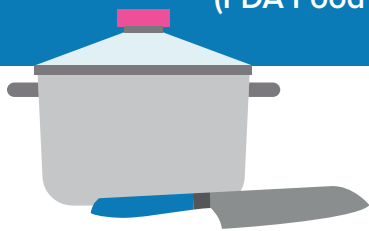
TOP 5 U.S. HEALTH INSPECTION VIOLATIONS (2022)

- 1 Equipment, Food-Contact Surfaces, Nonfood-Contact Surfaces, and Utensils **7.92%***
- 2 Cleaning, Frequency, and Restrictions **7.28%***
- 3 Equipment Maintenance and Adjustment **5.52%***
- 4 Hot and Cold Holding of Time/Temperature Control for Safety Food **5.45%***
- 5 Certified Food Protection Manager Presence **4.06%***

*The top 5 make up around 30% of all citations in 2022 out of 100%.

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Equipment, Food-Contact Surfaces, Nonfood-Contact Surfaces, and Utensils (FDA Food Code 4-601.11)



WHAT DO #1 AND #2 HAVE IN COMMON?

► Importance of Cleaning

- Prevents accumulation of debris, organic matter, and soil
- Reduces risk of pathogens and pests
- Maintains the efficacy of sanitizers
- Ensures public health and positive customer perceptions

► Challenges

- Labor shortages
- Time and resource constraints



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Cleaning, Frequency, and Restrictions (FDA Food Code 6-501.12)

DR. KING'S TIPS

☑ Complete Cleaning & Sanitation Prerequisite Program

- <https://digitaledition.food-safety.com/october-november-2022/column-sanitation/>

☑ Monitor Staff Performance

☑ Adopt Best Practices & Tools

- Review and update Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs)
- Consult food safety experts
- Choose suitable cleaning products

☑ Create a "Clean" Culture

- Management leads by example
- Gather and use customer feedback
- Highlight the link between cleanliness and sales performance

3

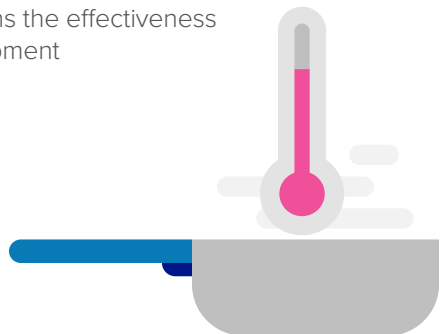
Equipment Maintenance and Adjustment (FDA Food Code 4-501.11)



WHAT DO #3 AND #4 HAVE IN COMMON?

► Importance of Compliance

- Ensures food safety and prevents bacterial growth
- Reduces risk of foodborne illness outbreaks
- Maintains the effectiveness of equipment



4

Hot and Cold Holding of Time/Temperature Control for Safety Food (FDA Food Code 3-501.16)

DR. KING'S TIPS

☑ Routine Equipment Validation and Inspection

- Schedule regular inspections (e.g., every quarter)
- Budget for repairs and replacements

☑ Proper Equipment Use

- Follow manufacturer's instructions
- Avoid overfilling equipment that relies on air circulation
- Don't mix hot with cold foods or cold with hot foods in holding for service containers

☑ Thermometer Use

- Use calibrated thermometers for food holding and cooking
- Ensure food is not in the "Danger Zone" (41°F to 135°F)
- Clean and sanitize thermometers between uses to prevent cross-contamination

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Certified Food Protection Manager Presence (FDA Food Code 2-102.12)



► What's the Role of a Certified Food Protection Manager?

- Formulate policies to reduce foodborne illness risks
- Verify food employees follow policies
- Communicate recommended practices to employees
- Be present during food preparation, handling, and sales

► Benefits of Having a Certified Manager

- Increased knowledge of foodborne illness risks
- Better implementation of food safety policies
- Research suggests lower risk of foodborne illness outbreaks

INSIGHTS INTO THE CERTIFICATION PROCESS

- ☑ **What?** Accredited programs offering knowledge tests
- ☑ **How?** Online course work and tests available, usually taking less than a day
- ☑ **Who?** The Conference for Food Protection sets certification criteria and ANSI serves as the accrediting body
- ☑ **Where?** Find available programs at: <https://anab.ansi.org/credentialing/food-protection-manager>



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