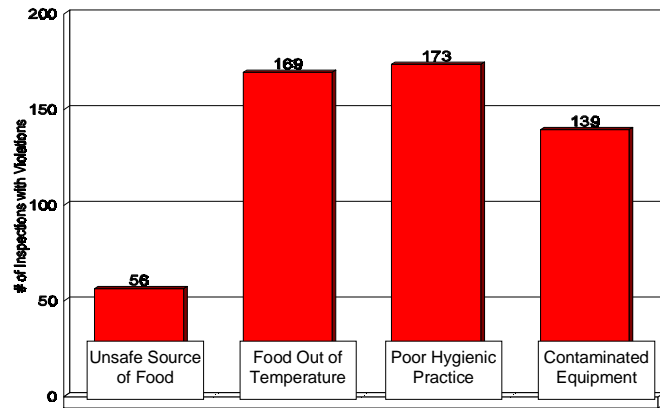




City of Manchester Department of Health FOOD SAFETY REPORT CARD

Foodborne Illness Risk Factors Identified During Routine Food Service Inspections in the City of Manchester, 2003



HEALTHY MANCHESTER 2010 OBJECTIVE: Decrease the number of foodborne illness risk factors found upon routine inspection by 25%.

Foodborne illnesses are a serious public health problem in the United States. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) estimates that each year 76 million people get sick, more than 300,000 are hospitalized, and 5,000 die as a result of foodborne illnesses. Primarily the very young, the elderly, and those with compromised immune systems are affected. ¹ More than 54 billion meals are served at 844,000 commercial food service establishments in the United States each year. ²

Ideally, the level of foodborne illness in a community would be the performance indicator used to determine the effectiveness of a local health department's food protection program. However, the occurrence of foodborne illness is grossly underreported and unreliable for several reasons. As an alternative to measuring levels of foodborne illness in a community, the CDC has defined five broad categories of foodborne illness risk factors that can be identified during routine inspections of food service establishments and serve as an ideal, measurable indicator of public health risk to a community. These risk factors include Food Obtained from Unsafe Sources; Inadequate Cooking and Improper Holding Temperatures; Poor Personal Hygiene; and Contaminated Equipment. ³ In 2003, the Manchester Health Department's Environmental Health Division performed over 1,500 unannounced, routine restaurant inspections. If the foodborne illness risk factors identified during these routine inspections could be reduced by 25%, the risk of acquiring a foodborne illness in Manchester restaurants would be dramatically reduced.

2003 Manchester Health Department Food Protection Program Facts

Food Permits Issued	Routine Inspections and Re-inspections	Confirmed Cases of <i>Campylobacter</i>	Confirmed Cases of <i>Salmonella</i>	Confirmed Cases of <i>E. coli</i> 0157
667	2,943	25*	17*	0*

Food Complaints	Citations Issued	Administrative Hearings	Excellence Awards	Food Handlers Trained
114	31	2	11	300

* Manchester residents

WHO PAYS? The annual cost of foodborne illnesses caused by the 4 most common bacterial pathogens alone (*Salmonella* strains, *Shigella*, *Campylobacter* species and *Escherichia coli*) has been estimated at \$6.9 billion. ⁴ This estimate does not include foodborne illnesses associated with viral pathogens such as Norwalk or Hepatitis A, which are both major contributors to the cost of foodborne illnesses. Costs typically associated with foodborne illnesses include direct and indirect health care costs, legal costs, lost productivity, and loss of business.



WHAT WORKS? RECOMMENDATIONS FOR THE COMMUNITY:

- Train All Food Service Workers.** The retail food service industry has a large employee population with high turnover rates. In some cases, language and literacy issues pose additional challenges and barriers to employee training. Food service workers must be trained on an ongoing basis in the prevention of foodborne illness and the reduction of risk factors.
- Require Demonstration of Knowledge by Food Service Managers.** Every food service establishment is required to identify a "person in charge." This "person in charge" or Food Service Manager should be required to demonstrate their ability to prevent a foodborne illness by attending a training program and passing a certification exam recognized by the Conference for Food Protection.
- Assure Competency for Those Conducting Food-Service Inspections.** Those responsible for implementing a food protection program should be trained and certified to a higher standard than food service workers. In addition, all public health workers must be diligent in their understanding of new pathogens, which may be transmitted through food.
- Public Information.** Provide the public with timely information on the type and frequency of foodborne illness risk factors identified during routine food service inspections. This information would enable the consumer to make an informed decision as to which food service establishments they care to patronize.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR THE INDIVIDUAL:

- Be Informed.** While 44% of adults eat at a restaurant on any given day, the majority of meals are still prepared and eaten at home. ² As a result, the food-preparing consumer needs to be informed on safe food handling practices to minimize foodborne illness risk factors in the home. Industry and the regulatory community should partner to provide food safety information to consumers through a variety of media (e.g. public service announcements, community presentations, and grocery bag stuffers) .
- Be Alert.** An increasing amount of food eaten in the US originates from other countries. Consumers, food service workers and regulators need to be alert to the biologic or chemical risks associated with the globalization of the food supply as well as the threat from bioterrorism.
- Be Healthy.** Ill food handlers are a major contributing factor in the spread of foodborne illnesses. Food handlers should not work when ill. Employers should provide appropriate compensation to ill food handlers to assure they do not work while ill.



FOR MORE INFORMATION ON HOW TO REDUCE FOODBORNE ILLNESS RISK FACTORS IN THE MANCHESTER COMMUNITY, PLEASE CONTACT:

- ✓ Manchester Health Department Division of Environmental Health: (603)624-6466
- ✓ Centers for Disease Control & Prevention: www.cdc.gov/foodsafety
- ✓ US Food and Drug Administration : www.cfsan.fda.gov
- ✓ US Department of Agriculture: www.fsis.usda.gov