

# VINELAND'S

## FOOD SAFETY NEWSLETTER

March 2006



PRODUCED BY THE VINELAND HEALTH DEPT- May be copied!

### Vibrio vulnificus in oysters. How might it affect you?

Vibrio vulnificus is a bacterium that occurs naturally in seawater. It thrives in the warm coastal waters of the Gulf of Mexico and can easily contaminate oysters and other shellfish. This bacterium presents no danger to healthy consumers. However, for those who have underlying health conditions, it can cause serious health problems or death, if the shellfish is eaten raw or undercooked. To protect your business and your customers, we suggest that you have a written warning about the dangers of certain people eating raw or undercooked shellfish. Please call us for suggestions on wording and placement of the warning.

### DID YOU KNOW...?

- You remove 42% more germs from your hands if you **use a paper towel** to dry them (after washing) verses an air dryer. To make things worse, if you dry your hands with an air dryer, odds are that your hands will be left a little moist, which is perfect for all that leftover bacteria to grow. (Either is allowed under the State Law.)
- Eight foods account for 90% of **allergic reactions**: milk, eggs, peanuts, wheat, soy, tree nuts (walnuts, pecans, etc.) fish and shellfish. Food allergies are the leading cause of anaphylaxis (a sudden, severe, and potentially fatal allergic reaction). Your employees should know who to ask and should never guess about ingredients. Call 911 right away if someone has a reaction.
- The Vineland Health Department has a comprehensive program called "**Food Allergy Training Guide for Restaurants and Food Services**" available for loan. It is on CD-ROM.
- A **handwash sink** should be within 25 feet of any food prep, dishwashing or bar area without obstructions.
- **Flies** vomit on food when they land on it! This helps them to digest the food and suck it back up, leaving some vomit and bacteria behind. Some researchers believe that the increase in Campylobacter, a bacteria causing foodborne illness throughout the world, is strongly associated with an increase in fly populations.
- **Norovirus**, the leading cause of acute gastrointestinal disease in this country, can occur anytime, but tends to occur more often from December to March. Always send employees with vomiting and/or diarrhea home. They should stay home for at least 48 hours.
- **Never smell a moldy item!** Very small amounts of some mold toxins can cause illness. You can't tell if the mold is dangerous by looking at it. If a food is moldy, toss it out!

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**FOOD SAFETY CLASSES AVAILABLE**

**FOOD SAFETY –PART I (THE BASICS)**

March 20<sup>th</sup> and 21<sup>st</sup>, 2006 – 1:00 to 4:00 pm (both days)

March 27<sup>th</sup> and 28<sup>th</sup>, 2006 – 6:00 to 9:00 pm (both days)

April 24<sup>th</sup> and 25<sup>th</sup>, 2006- 1:00 to 4:00 pm (both days) in Spanish

This food safety class is highly recommended for anyone directly involved in food preparation! Classes focus on the causes of foodborne illness and how to protect your establishment from the financial disaster and embarrassment associated with an outbreak. After successfully completing this 6-hour course, a certificate will be issued that is good for 3 years. (Instructor: Jeanne Garbarino for all three classes, along with Emma Lopez, Health Educator for the class in Spanish)

**HOW TO REGISTER**

This course costs only \$5.00 per person, a real bargain. Successful completion of this class helps your eligibility for **Vineland's Five Star Award** in Food Safety. To register, return the enclosed application to the address listed. For more information, please call Jeanne Garbarino at 794-4131. **All courses are held at Cunningham Park at 1676 N. West Ave in Vineland.** Confirmation and directions will be sent upon registering.

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**Interesting Website:** [www.finel.fi/foodlist.php?lang=en](http://www.finel.fi/foodlist.php?lang=en)

This website will show you about nutritional content in foods. It can be used for various reasons. For example, if someone came into your restaurant and wanted to know which fish on your menu had the most calcium or the least iodine, you could look this up very easily. Once in the website, click on "components" and select the aspect you are interested in. It is very user friendly!

**Which is better? Soap and water or waterless hand gels?**

Researchers at the University of North Carolina and Duke have concluded that soap and water is the best at removing bacteria and viruses from your hands. It didn't matter if the soap was plain or antibacterial, washing your hands with soap and water removes 99% of disease-causing bacteria and viruses. The waterless, alcohol-based hand sanitizers will remove 90% of the bacteria if used for 10 seconds initially, but became less effective after multiple uses. It is important to note that these hand sanitizers do not kill or remove viruses, only bacteria. The conclusion: if a handwash sink is available, it is always the best choice!



## Food Allergens May Sneak Up on You!

Allergens are ingredients that can cause allergic reactions from skin rashes to death. They can show up in the most unusual places and under uncommon names. For example, milk may be listed as *casein* and wheat may be referred to as *gluten* on food labels. Here is an example of where some of the major allergens may lurk:

### Milk:

- Deli meats might have been contaminated by cheese if sliced on the same slicer.
- *Casein* (milk) may have been added to canned tuna.
- Melted butter may be added to meat after it has been cooked.
- *Whey* is a derivative of milk.

### Eggs:

- Coffee drinks are sometimes dressed up with foam made of eggs
- Egg substitutes and processed pasta may contain eggs.
- *Albumin* is a derivative of eggs.

### Peanuts:

- *Mandelonas* are peanuts soaked in almond flavoring.
- *Arachis* oil is peanut oil.
- Artificial walnuts or pecans may be flavored peanuts.
- Peanut butter may be the “secret” ingredient in chili or used to seal the ends of burritos or egg rolls.

### Tree Nuts:

- BBQ sauce, cereals, crackers, and ice cream may contain nuts.
- Natural and artificial flavorings may be made from nuts.
- *Marzipan* is ground almond paste.

### Fish/Seafood:

- *Caponata* is a relish that contains anchovies.
- Caesar salad dressings and Worcestershire sauce may contain anchovies.

### Soybeans:

- Soybeans may be found in baked goods, canned tuna, cereals, crackers, sauces, Tamari, soups and peanut butter.

### Wheat:

- Wheat can be found in many foods such as hot dogs, ice cream, cracker meal, or imitation beef, pork or shrimp.
- *Hydrolyzed protein* or *gluten protein* is a derivative of wheat.

If a customer asks about an allergen, be sure to check all of your labels and the habits of your cooks. You never know where allergens are hiding. Even trace amounts of an allergen can cause a severe reaction.



## TEST YOUR FOOD SAFETY KNOWLEDGE!

What comes to mind when you think of a “safe” kitchen? Clean floors? Spotless counters? They can help, but a truly “safe” kitchen is one that relies on more than just looks. It also depends on safe food handling practices. Let’s see how well you do!

- 1) When a guest, who has a food allergy, asks about food ingredients and preparation methods, the appropriate answer is:
  - a) “I’m almost positive that the item doesn’t contain that allergen.”
  - b) “I’m sure we can leave it out of the dish, if you’d like. I’ll just make a note of it on the ticket”
  - c) “I don’t know. Let me get the manager/chef to be sure.”
- 2) Slicers should be broken down, cleaned and sanitized every:
  - a) 4 hours of use or between uses of raw produce and with potentially hazardous foods
  - b) 24 hours as long as the meats were all cooked
  - c) Once a week
- 3) How short should a person’s hair be to exempt them from wearing a hair net, hat, etc.?
  - a. Less than 1”
  - b. Less than 2”
  - c. Length doesn’t matter
- 4) Why must you cook pork to a minimum of 150° F?
  - a. To kill bacteria such as Salmonella and Campylobacter
  - b. To destroy the worms that cause Trichinosis
  - c. All of the above
- 5) What should the level of chlorine be in a sanitizing solution (sink or bucket)?
  - a. 25 ppm
  - b. 50 ppm
  - c. 100 ppm

### ANSWERS:

1. c. – People with food allergies can die if you’re wrong. Never guess or take this request lightly. Find someone who knows for sure. Simply prepared foods minimize risks. For example, a baked potato is less of a risk than French fries. Broiled chicken is less of a risk than chicken with a complicated sauce.
2. a. Slicers must be completely broken down every 4 hours after use with any potentially hazardous food, if the slicer is not stored in a refrigerated room. It only takes 4 hours for bacteria to grow to dangerous levels that will contaminate the next food item you cut. After cutting a raw meat, the slicer should be broken down, cleaned and sanitized right away to prevent cross-contamination.
3. c. Super short or super long, it all should be covered in some manner. Hair is considered a physical hazard and is a big turnoff to your customers, if found in their food. Hats or hair nets are acceptable for shorter hair. Long hair can be tied up.
4. c. Undercooked pork is dangerous to consume because of Trichinosis, bacteria and tape worms. Never serve undercooked pork to your customers.
5. b. 50 ppm will reduce bacteria to a safe level. It should not be any more or less. You must have test strips and check the levels to be sure. If you are washing a lot, you may have to add more sanitizer during the process or change the entire solution.