

Talking Tazewell

Sanitation Sense

Update for food manger exam “passing score”

When we offer the ServSafe® examination, the answer sheet always has demographic questions about age, gender, work experience and other information. We explain that this data is collected to see how examination scores are determined by other factors than just the material learned in the course. ServSafe® has now completed its most recent 5 year assessment of these examinations. As a result, the passing score for the exam is changing from a 75% to 70% for exams after 7/7/22.

This new passing score will allow for more students to be able to achieve a passing grade while still understanding the basic principles as required for retail food establishments.

As a reminder, there are many ways to complete this examination.

- Find an onsite classroom style course taught by an instructor.
- Complete the course fully online at an ANSI approved course website.
- Complete the educational course online and then find a proctor for the examination. FYI, the proctor can only offer the examination that matches the online course you complete.

Our ServSafe® courses are offered 9 times a year as a two-day onsite class. We also offer a proctored exam only on the third Monday of every month (barring holidays).

The last page of this newsletter has more detailed information on accessing these courses. Also, exam accommodations can be requested and approved by ServSafe® for the following:

- Reader allowed (provided by examinee)
- Large print paper exams
- Exam in foreign language (Chinese, Korean, Spanish, Japanese)

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Did you know that we offer offsite food handler classes for groups of 10 or more?

For more information contact us at 309-929-0272 or email us at eh@tchd.net

Demonstration of Knowledge

When the FDA food code was implemented, it added new items to every inspection that required answers that were never asked before. Asking for a written employee illness form (non-COVID) or requiring a procedure and cleanup kit for vomiting and diarrhea have been additions that some locations have issues dealing with. Sometimes it is turnover and that person who knew what to do is now gone. Other locations, it is a lack of consistent standards that are used by management with all staff.

The #1 violation on the inspection form is “demonstration of knowledge.” That simply means, can you answer our questions during your inspection and carry out the associated task or identify a trained employee to carry out that task.

- The acceptable answers are “I know that and can explain that to you,” or “I’m not sure but can find out while you are here by looking it up.” You sometimes get that answer from us as well as we have not memorized the food code. Sometimes, we look up the answer onsite during the inspection if we’re not sure.
- Unacceptable answers are “I don’t know,” or “I just work here.” These answers create a violation on their own.

Remember, if you have posted signage (e.g. correct hand washing poster) that meets the need for the question/inspection, knowing that signage exists and showing it to the inspector is “demonstration of knowledge.” That “demonstration of knowledge” also includes setting up a sanitizer and correctly using test strips, answering questions about reportable foodborne illness symptoms, calibrating a thermometer, explaining your date labels for ready-to-eat foods and even having your certified food manager certificate. Explaining correctly your day to day tasks is what we are after. When we are onsite, if these are issues you are having, just be honest with your inspector so they can work on a plan of action to allow your establishment to close any gaps you have.

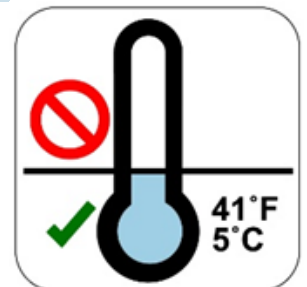
Keep Hot Foods Hot and Cold Foods Cold.

Whether you’re transporting food to go hiking, camping, to a barbeque, or a picnic, the rule stays the same: keep hot foods hot and cold foods cold. Food is in the “**Danger Zone**” when it is in the temperature range of 41°F. and 135°F. If in the “Danger Zone” for too long, bacteria can multiply to dangerous levels. Perishable foods (such as hamburgers, hotdogs, and chicken wings) should be discarded if left out longer than two hours, or one hour if outdoor or indoor temperatures in the area are above 90 F.

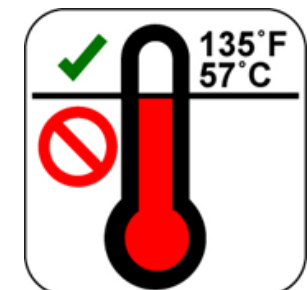


- Keep cold foods at a temperature of 41°F. or below by keeping food nestled in ice, in a cooler with a cold source, or refrigerated until ready to serve.
- Keep hot foods at a temperature of 135°F. or above by placing food on a grill, in a preheated oven, warming trays, chafing dishes or slow cookers.

The warmer the temperature, the sooner food needs to be refrigerated. Be sure to bring a cooler with ice to the next cookout to preserve any perishable foods.



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Acid Based Sanitizer

Sanitizing is the process of decreasing the number of microorganisms to a safe level. Soil, grease, or dust will inactivate sanitizers, so it is important to clean and rinse a surface before you sanitize it.

Sanitizers are pesticides. Nationally, pesticides are regulated by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). When using sanitizers on food contact surfaces, check to see if the label includes an EPA registration number and then follow all label directions and all relevant state pesticide regulations.

When choosing a chemical sanitizer for your operation, make sure it is approved for use on food contact surfaces based on the label information. The manufacturer is a good resource when determining whether a specific sanitizer is safe for your operation.

Peroxyacetic acids are approved sanitizers for use with food contact surfaces along with chlorine, iodine, and quaternary ammonium or "quats." Sanitizers are available in different forms and concentrations. To make a concentration of peroxyacetic sanitizer that is safe for the intended use, mix a specific amount of the sanitizer with potable water.

Always measure sanitizer amounts. The concentration is measured in parts per million, or ppm, and will be specified on the product label.

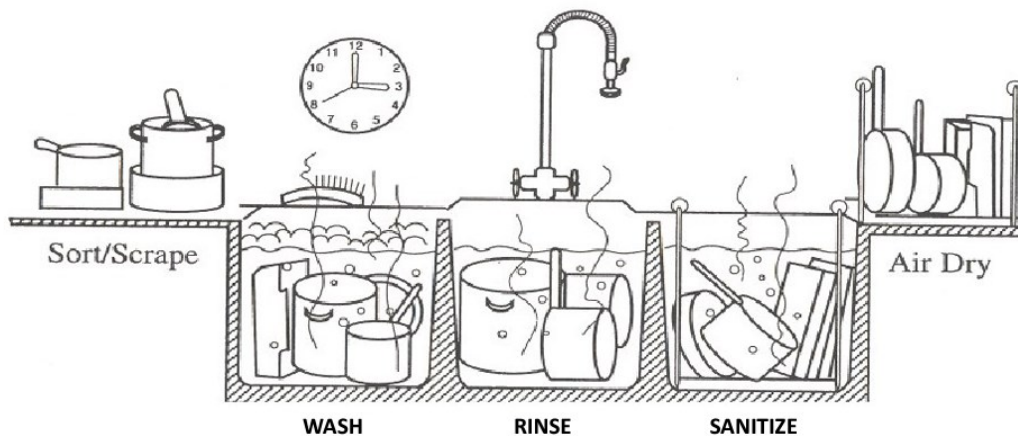
Use peroxyacetic acid test strips to determine the concentration of your sanitizing solution. You can purchase them from your chemical supply company. Be sure that the test strips are designed for your specific peroxyacetic acid sanitizer.

Test the concentration of your sanitizing solution when it is initially mixed, and periodically during use, to ensure the concentration is still at an effective level. Sanitizing solutions can lose effectiveness over time due to exposure to air, organic materials, soap, or other factors.



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*Remember, the water hardness, pH (acidity) and water temperature makes a difference with your sanitizer concentration. Talk to your chemical provider if this new sanitizer is being used.



Food Manager Course Options

In person, online with proctored exam or fully online

Food Manager class options:

Classroom style course: This is the type of class offered at TCHD (see link/attachment for application). This is a 2-day class (first day full class, second day class in the morning with examination in the afternoon). Other instructors offer this course and if it meets the 7-hour minimum standard as well as offers an ANSI exam at the end, it is an acceptable class in Illinois.

Online course: Any of the options for online course may be completed. After you receive a passing certificate, you must find a testing site and proctor to offer the exam for the specific online course you took.

Example: You complete the “Servsafe” course online and need to take an exam. TCHD offers the proctored exam during a regular scheduled exam date. Fill out the application and mark “proctored” exam and then choose the exam date, no classroom time necessary.

Warning: If you completed a different online course, You would not be allowed to sit for a “Servsafe” exam we offer TCHD offers the “proctored” Servsafe exam option for up to 10 people third Monday of every month. It is on a first come, first serve basis. Contact our office at 309-929-0272 for more details.

Fully online course: A few of the “6 ANSI Certified Food Manager Course Options” have a full online course and exam. You will take this course and exam on your own. You must contact the online course provider to be sure your computer meets the needs for the examination.

6 ANSI Certified Food Manager Course Options:

<https://anabpd.ansi.org/Accreditation/credentialing/personnel-certification/food-protection-manager/ALLdirectoryListing?menuID=8&prgID=8&statusID=4>

TCHD Website for food manager and food handler classes

<https://www.tazewellhealth.org/177/Education-Training>

Survey Time!

In an effort to improve our customer service, Tazewell County Health Department Environmental Health Division is conducting a survey of our recent clients. Your input can help us improve our service to benefit all of our clients. The survey will take you approximately 5 minutes to complete .

Simply click on the link below, or cut and paste the entire URL into your browser to access the survey:

<https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/9F5SVH2>

Your input is very important to us and will be kept strictly confidential.

