

## Hand Washing

### Hand washing is Important!

Some germs are harmless, others cause serious illness. Germs grow fast! You can prevent dangerous germs from growing. How? Washing your hands using a mechanical action (friction, rubbing) soap and/or detergent, and flushing the germs away by use of running hot water. Lather and rub for 20 seconds, and rinse twice. (It is also recommended that food workers have a nail brush to clean under fingernails.) Turn the water faucets on and off using paper towels (germs sit on handles). Dry hands with a paper towel, open restroom door, and throw away the towel.

**Hand washing 101:** The point cannot be made often enough, hand washing is the single-most important means of preventing the spread of infection. Simple acts like blowing your nose, using the toilet or scratching your face can contaminate hands with potentially deadly bacteria. Those germs can be spread to food if you fail to wash your hands frequently and thoroughly. Here's a little refresher course on hand washing requirements for food workers.

### Hands *must* be washed:

- Before preparing foods or putting on gloves
- After touching human body parts (other than clean arms or hands)
- After using the toilet
- After caring for or touching an animal
- After coughing, sneezing, using a tissue or handkerchief, using tobacco, eating or drinking
- After engaging in any activities that might contaminate the hands, like taking out garbage, handling soiled utensils or equipment, handling cleaning chemicals
- During food preparation when switching from working with raw meats and fish to ready-to-eat foods

If you have to remove a mop or food scraps from the sink basin in order to get your hands washed, then you're at the wrong sink. The Food Code unequivocally states that hand washing sinks must be dedicated to the task at hand.

Hand washing lavatories are to be equipped with liquid or powder soap, hot water, and a hand drying device (no cloth towels). Disposable nail brushes and a sanitizing solution are also recommended.