

**Top Critical Violation in Benton County: Hot and Cold Holding by Scott Kruger**

In Benton County, between January 1 and April 27, 2011, hot and cold holding violation (Oregon Food Code 3-501.16 03G) was cited 25 times.

The CDC (Center for Disease Control) list the following five areas as preventing food borne illness:

- **Potentially hazardous foods kept in temperature control. ( Hot foods hot, cold foods cold)**
- Personal Hygiene (Clean hands, cloths, hair etc.)
- Cooking raw animal products to proper temperature
- Equipment properly sanitized
- Food from approved sources (inspected sources)

**The danger zone for potentially hazardous food products is between 41°F and 140°F.** Here is what the 1999 FDA Food Code Annex 3 says is the public health significance for this violation:

Bacterial growth and/or toxin production can occur if potentially hazardous food (time/temperature control for safety food) remains in the temperature "Danger Zone" of 5°C to 57°C (41°F to 140°F) too long. Up to a point, the rate of growth increases with an increase in temperature within this zone. Beyond the upper limit of the optimal temperature range for a particular organism, the rate of growth decreases. Operations requiring heating or cooling of food should be performed as rapidly as possible to

avoid the possibility of bacterial growth.

Here are some areas to consider when hot or cold holding:

1. Monitor and document hot and cold food temperatures on a log using your food probe thermometer. If a deviation is noted ask why? Is the unit not functioning properly? Has the food been out of the hot or cold holding unit during preparation or service? Was the food improperly cooled?
2. Don't over stock refrigeration units. This creates poor air flow which could lead to uneven temperature distribution.
3. Clean and maintain refrigeration condensers. A dusty condenser means less efficiency. Look for plastic wrap or wax paper clogging air ways or fans.
4. Train staff to understand why monitoring hot and cold holding is important. A food borne illness outbreak can mean loss of business and jobs.
5. Our department is willing to provide training during staff meetings to discuss critical elements that can cause a food borne illness.

We will be addressing the most frequently cited critical violations in future editions of Food Safety Focus. We hope this will be a tool to educate staff & help provide insight about areas that create increased risk to public health.

**FRAUD ALERT: Food Inspector Scam**

Benton County Environmental Health has received 3 reports within the past 5 months of individuals contacting restaurants within the county claiming to be health inspectors from the "State Health Department". These individuals call with the purpose of "scheduling a complaint inspection". This is fraudulent activity. One operator who received one of these calls obtained the name, address and phone numbers of the individual caller. The name, address & phone number were not legitimate. The recent incidents have targeted Asian restaurants and grocery stores.

Some of these fraudulent callers claim that the facility is or will be subject to some kind of fine from the local health department. In some instances the caller has threatened restaurant operators in various ways trying to get Social Security numbers, phone numbers, and credit card information.

If you are in doubt about the identity of someone claiming to be from Benton County Environmental Health or the Health Department you should attempt to collect as much information as possible such as the name of caller, agency or group they represent including address, purpose of the call, return phone number, date of call, etc. If the caller claims to be a Benton County health inspector and you are concerned if the person is legitimate, we encourage you to call our office at 541-766-6841 to verify the identity and the purpose of the visit.

Finally if you suspect that you have been contacted as part of a scam you may file a complaint with the Federal Trade Commission at <http://www.ftc.gov/phonefraud> or by contacting the FTC toll-free helpline: 1.877-FTC-HELP (1-877-382-4357); TTY: 1.866.653.4261

## Food Service Advisory Committee (FSAC) Spotlight: John G. Booker, Jr.

John G. Booker, Jr., a FSAC member since 2005, has over 15 years of experience in the restaurant industry. He has spent the last 11 years at both the Burger King franchisees of Boss Enterprises and recently for Sara Foods serving in the both the management and employee sides.

*"The FSAC committee provides input and guidance regarding annual fee setting and food safety. I like the fact that we can share problems with one another and come up with solutions or answers on food safety issues. I enjoy being able to use my education and experience in both accounting and the restaurant industry to discuss the budget and fees affecting the food service industry. I encourage either the general public or restaurant people to contact me with any concerns or questions." - John*

**Next FSAC meeting is August 22, 2011 at 3:30pm**

**Are you interested in becoming a member of FSAC? Call 541-766-6800**

## Benton County's Food Safety Alerting System

We use this email listserv to send out timely emails regarding recalls and food safety issues that affect Benton County. If you would like to be added to our email group call 541-766-6841.

**FDA's Recall website:**  
[www.fda.gov/Safety/Recalls/default.htm](http://www.fda.gov/Safety/Recalls/default.htm)

## FOOD SAFETY EDUCATION

**Food Manager's Certification Training:** Tentatively Sept. 22, 2011 (details to follow)

**Food Handler Class:** Thursdays 9:30am & 3:30pm (English) and Fridays 1:30pm (Spanish)

**EFFECTIVE January 1, 2012— food handler classes will be held on the 1st and 3rd Thursdays in English, and every Friday at 1:30 in Spanish**

**Food Handler ONLINE:** [www.co.benton.or.us/health/environmental](http://www.co.benton.or.us/health/environmental)



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# Food Safety Focus!