



Plumas County Environmental Health Fact Sheet on SB 144 (Cal Code)

Background

In 2006 the governor signed SB 144 which is also known as Cal Code. This bill was the culmination of many years of collaboration among public health professionals at the local, state and federal levels, as well as private industry. Cal Code completely replaces the California Uniform Retail Food Facilities Law (CURFFL), the current retail food law. Cal Code becomes effective July 1, 2007.

Objective

The primary objective of Cal Code is to reduce the incidence of food borne illness. The Centers for Disease Control (CDC) estimates that food borne illness is responsible for 76 million illnesses, 325,000 hospitalizations, and over 5,000 deaths in the United States each year. The CDC also estimates the cost of food borne illness annually in the US is in the billions of dollars.

Risk Factors of Food Borne Illness

There are 5 primary risk factors associated with food borne illness. Cal Code's focus is to reduce and eliminate these factors:

- Food from Unsafe Sources
- Inadequate Cooking
- Improper Holding Temperatures
- Contaminated Equipment
- Poor Personal Hygiene

Cal Code from the Restaurant Owner's Perspective

Cal Code's emphasis on reducing food borne illness risk factors results in an expanded, more detailed code. Restaurant owners will notice the following changes:

- Inspection Form—The new restaurant inspection form has many inspection categories that could be a factor in food borne illnesses. If any of these categories are found to be out of compliance, the inspector is required to note a "major violation".
- Employee Health—Code sections regarding employee health are greatly expanded. Reportable illnesses for food handlers have been expanded. Operators will be responsible to limit or restrict food service workers with signs of potential food borne illness.
- Employee Knowledge—All employees must have food safety knowledge as it pertains to their specific job or assignment. More training of food service employees will be needed.
- Cooking Temperatures—Specific cooking temperatures for more types of potentially hazardous foods are now specified. Increased food knowledge is necessary.
- Licensed Health Care Facilities are now under local permit and inspection programs.

Plumas County Environmental Health Implementation Plan

All counties are required to enforce Cal Code starting in July. In order to ensure food facilities are aware of the new law and reporting format, Environmental Health has developed the following implementation plan:

- February 2007 Environmental Health Director attends Cal Code Train-the-Trainer
- March-April 2007 In-House Environmental Health Field Staff training;
Develop outreach tools and information
- April 3, 2007 Board of Supervisors Awareness Briefing
- Mid April 2007 Outreach Letter to All Fixed Food Facility Owners;
Invitation to Cal Code Orientation Workshops;
Establish Information Links on County Website
- May 2007 Cal Code Workshops Throughout the County;
Provide Copies of Cal Code to Restaurant Owners
- June 2007 Amend Title 6 of Plumas County Code
- July 1, 2007 Cal Code Implementation
- January 2008 Begin Posting Food Facility Inspection Reports on County Web Site

For More Information

For more information, please contact the Plumas County Environmental Health office in Quincy at 283-6355 or in Chester at 258-2536.