

Introduction to a Sanitation Program

The Food and Food Establishment Regulation (AR 328/2003) was repealed in April 2006 and replaced with the Food Regulation 31/2006. The new regulation will require all food establishments to develop and have in place written procedures designed to ensure its safe and sanitary operation.

Section 29 of these Regulations states:

29 (1) A food establishment must have written procedures designed to ensure its safe and sanitary operation and maintenance.

(2) The procedures must include:

- a) The cleaning and sanitizing requirements for the food establishment and for all equipment and utensils in it, if any, that are not normally washed in a dishwasher, and*
- b) A list of all cleaning and sanitizing agents used in the food establishment, including their concentrations and uses.*

Please review the following documents. They are a generic model of such a sanitation program. Proper training, good cleaning and maintenance schedules are essential to keeping a restaurant and foodservice operation clean and sanitary. But, there is a lot more to keeping a foodservice operation sanitary than just wiping and wet mopping.

While cleaning and sanitizing surfaces used for food preparation is something that occurs constantly, complete cleaning and sanitation must occur at the end of the day for equipment that holds and dispenses potentially hazardous food, such as meat slicers. Other pieces of equipment may require less frequent cleaning, perhaps once or several times per week, while walk-in coolers, stationary equipment, metal shelves and ceilings may only need to be washed once a month. Each operation has different requirements depending on the type of food served, the amount of traffic, and the public that is being served. Whatever the timetable, it is critical that every foodservice operator create cleaning schedules that are specific to his or her operation.

Step 1: Organizing Your Information

The complexity of the required written program should reflect the needs of the particular food establishment. A facility that does more food handling and preparation will have a more extensive written sanitation plan than a facility that has minimal food handling and preparation.

The objective of a written sanitation plan is to provide reasonable assurance that the food establishment is being cleaned effectively and consistently. This will help you to standardize your procedures and identify areas that may require improvement. Your Environmental Health Officer (EHO) can advise you on particular items that you should include when developing a plan for your facility.

Record keeping is absolutely essential for this process to work. A file or binder with all the pertinent information is recommended so that information can be easily accessed, reviewed and updated as needed.

So, what goes in the file or binder?

- 1) Procedures, policies, equipment information
- 2) Routine maintenance reports, equipment service reports, problem reports
- 3) Chemical information on products being used
- 4) MSDS sheets
- 5) Any other pertinent information such as staff in-services, discussions with your Environmental Health Officer, etc.

The following generic forms (located in the appendix) are available to help you:

- Demand Cleaning Schedule
- Daily Cleaning Schedule
- Weekly Cleaning Schedule
- Monthly Cleaning Schedule
- Maintenance Record

Step 2: Using Your Information

The in-house records, equipment service reports and reports from your Environmental Health Officer will help to identify problems and areas that might develop into problems. Review the information on a weekly basis. Schedule your review for the same time each week unless other circumstances dictate a different review time, for example, immediately following a visit from a repair or service person and during an inspection by the Environmental Health Officer.

Remember that the intent of the legislation is to provide reasonable assurance that cleaning and sanitation is consistent and effective in your establishment. Instituting a program and following through with changes can easily achieve this goal. Don't fall into the trap of doing your paper work and filing it away! The information has to be used to be useful!!

Step 3: Talk to your Environmental Health Officer

Your EHO has access to information that can be of great assistance in assessing a problem, implementing control measures and reviewing your procedures. If you have any difficulties or even if you just want to be sure you are "on the right track", call your Environmental Health Officer.

An effective cleaning and sanitizing program will improve the safety of your foodservice operation, reassure the public about your facility and provide you with a sense of satisfaction. Measures are easy to implement and they also save you money by avoiding spoiled product, expensive repairs and a loss of business.

Contact us at 1-833-476-4743 or [submit a request online](#) at ahs.ca/eph.

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Appendix A – Demand Cleaning Schedule

Ensure the sanitizing solution is at the correct concentration by utilizing test methods (papers).

Demand Cleaning & Sanitizing Schedule (Equipment/utensils that come in direct contact with food)

NAME OF EQUIPMENT	INSTRUCTIONS	SANITIZING SOLUTION & CONCENTRATION
Cutting Boards	Washed and sanitized immediately after use	
Chopping Blocks	Washed and sanitized immediately after use	
Meat Slicer	Washed and sanitized immediately after use	
Etc., etc.		

Appendix F – List of Cleaning and Sanitizing Agents Used in Food Establishment

Name of Chemical Agent	Type of Agent/ Supplier Information	Agent Concentration Used	Use in Food Establishment	Storage Location(s)
Diversol	Chlorine	100 mg/L (See manufacturer's instructions)	-sanitizing food contact surfaces after washing with soap and water solution (See manufacturer's instructions & MSDS for safety precautions)	-Main storage (janitor's cleaning cabinet) -Labeled spray bottles at work stations