



# UL's Everclean<sup>®</sup> solutions

*Newsletter - July edition*



**Empowering Trust<sup>®</sup>**

# Basic food safety tips

From UL's Everclean® solutions



The landscape of the U.S. food industry continues to change, and correspondingly, there have been significant changes in the food industry in the past several years. With this emphasis on conveniences and efficiency, the food industry is under greater pressure to meet public demand for a greater variety of high-quality foods that have been prepared and cooked safely.

In essence with what the world is currently experiencing with COVID-19 during this epidemic, it is imperative to practice expert food safety procedures such as proper handwashing and keeping your hands away from your face. Although there is no evidence to support transmission of COVID-19 associated with food, you should always handle and prepare food safely. Always remember the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) top 5 risk factors for food safety. These factors are defined as practices or procedures that pose the greatest potential for foodborne illness.

- ✓ Sick food workers. If you are experiencing any of the top 6 reportable symptoms, do not come into contact with ready-to-eat foods and/or equipment. These symptoms include, but are not limited to; diarrhea, vomiting, fever, jaundice (yellowish pigmentation of the skin and eyes), sore throat with fever, or an uncovered infected wound (for example, a cut, lesion, or boil)
- ✓ Always practice good hygiene. Good hygiene is the responsibility of the food worker. Remember to wash your hands in a hand sink only and not in a food preparation sink, dish sink, or mop sink. Be sure to NOT substitute proper handwashing techniques with warm water and soap with just hand sanitizer. Do not repeatedly use the same cloth towels or aprons for hand wiping. Do not touch ready-to-eat foods with bare hands. Always follow single-use glove guidelines.
- ✓ Safely holding hot and cold foods. Proper holding temperatures must be maintained during display, storage, and transportation of foods. Be sure that cold foods maintain a temperature of 40 degrees Fahrenheit (F) or below and hot foods maintain an internal temperature of 135 degrees F or higher. Foods labeled "Keep refrigerated" must be refrigerated. Any food labeled "Keep frozen" must be kept frozen or "hard to the touch". Be sure to cover food to maintain cold

and hot holding temperatures as well as using proper equipment. Always remember, when in doubt, throw it out!

- ✓ Proper cooking temperatures. In order to kill any bacteria present, foods must be cooked to minimum internal temperature and sustain that temperature for at least 15 seconds. Also, always reheat foods previously cooked and cooled to an internal temperature of 165 degrees F or above. Avoid using crockpots to reheat foods as it generally cannot heat food quickly enough.

*Photo challenge!*

*How keen is your eye? What is wrong with the below photo? (The answer is on the next page)*



- ✓ Disease and can contaminate food and food contact surfaces. Be sure to clean and sanitize food contact surfaces frequently if outside due to the higher presence of flies. If inside, be sure to protect outer opening by keeping outer doors closed, repair screens if need be, and use air curtains. Keep grass and trees trimmed away from walls and only use approved pest control methods.
- ✓ Food sources. Food can be contaminated anywhere along the supply chain so it is imperative that food operators purchase food from an approved source and know when to accept or reject fresh meat, poultry and seafood.

## Season tips by UL

Summertime is quickly approaching! While packing up for summer picnics or cookouts, don't forget food safety. Did you know that food poisoning is more common in the summer than at any other time of the year? This is because bacteria grows faster in hot and humid weather. In the right conditions, bacteria can multiply quickly and contaminate food.

Unfortunately, you won't always know when food is contaminated – it will usually look, smell and taste normal, putting you and your family at risk of food poisoning. Some people are more at risk than others such as pregnant women, the elderly, young children, and people with chronic illnesses. About 1 in 6 people in the United States will become sick from something they ate this year, and a few safety tips can help keep you and your family from being part of a statistic.

**Wash your hands/change your gloves.** After handling meat or other raw products, make sure you wash your hands with warm soap and water for 20 seconds before handling any other products. For food truck workers, handling money and food at the same time can be problematic. This is common on a food cart/truck, and not satisfied by gloves that are not changed. Remember that contaminated gloves are worse than dirty hands, which are easily washed.

**Keep raw food away from cooked food.** If you're preparing to grill, be sure to use one plate for the raw items and a separate, clean plate for the newly cooked foods. The same rules apply for tongs and other serving utensils.

**Wash produce thoroughly.** Remember to wash fresh produce by hand in cool tap water to remove any bacteria that may be on the surface. This includes washing produce like melon before you slice or peel it to make sure that any bacteria isn't transferred from the knife to your fruit or veggies.

**Keep your cooler cold.** Rule of thumb, at least one quarter of the space in your cooler should be dedicated to ice. It's also a good idea to freeze any foods that can be frozen before packing them in the cooler. Remember the cooler needs to stay at or below 40 degrees F. Don't forget your thermometer!

**Get it hot.** In addition to checking cooler temperatures, the temperatures of hot foods also need to be checked. Beef burgers should be cooked to an internal temperature of 160 degrees F and chicken should be cooked to 165 degrees F. Be sure to use a meat thermometer to measure temperatures! Remember to calibrate your thermometer!

**Stay out of the danger zone.** The danger zone of food temperatures is between 40-140 degrees F. Food that is in this range has the opportunity to allow dangerous bacteria to grow and harm those who consume it. Be sure to keep foods colder than 40 degrees F and warmer than 140 degrees F. Many of the food safety instructions refer to 40-140 F, however, the model Food Code and the various state and local laws set 41 degrees F and below and 135 degrees F or higher as the safe zones while the danger zone in law is between 42 degrees F-134 degrees F.

**Monitor leftovers.** Perishable foods, such as cooked or raw meats and salads, should never be left out at room temperature for more than two hours. When the weather gets hot, for example, over 90 degrees F, your food safety window for leaving food out shortens by roughly an hour. Be sure to discard any food that surpasses this time limit.

**Don't re-use marinades.** Often times, meats and poultry are marinated then grilled. Be sure to discard used marinade to prevent raw meat juices from getting onto your cooked food. If you plan to use the marinade as a sauce for cooked meat, reserve some before marinating the meat.

**Power Outages.** A power outage can strike a food facility at any time, especially as we approach the hotter summer months and there are power grid strains. Knowing how to respond can make all the difference between keeping your customers safe, happy and healthy, and causing a foodborne illness outbreak.

*Photo challenge! (Answer)*

*The cashews are nested uncovered over the uncovered croutons. Cashews are tree nuts and one of the eight major allergens. Both ingredients are very similar in color, so if the nuts end up in a salad, it could go unnoticed and cause an allergic reaction for a guest. Allergic reactions can range from minor (hives) to major (respiratory), including possible death. Nuts should be stored covered and away from other foods.*



Here is a short list of what to do:

- Immediately discontinue any food preparation and service
- Keep cold foods cold and hot foods hot
- Keep doors to refrigerators and walk-ins closed
- Check internal food temperatures when the power is restored
- When in doubt, throw it out!

Larger food chains may need to contact their corporate/HR office to confirm what steps the firm needs to take. If a power outage occurs while at home, the same rules apply. Before a power outage, keep appliance thermometers in your refrigerator and freezer and be prepared with having a cooler ready; freeze containers of water and gel packs, and buy dry ice or ice packs. During a power outage, keep refrigerator and freezer doors closed. If the doors stay closed, food will stay safe for up to four hours in a refrigerator, 48 hours in a full freezer, and 24 hours in a half-full freezer. After a power outage, never taste food to determine if it is safe to eat.

# Meet the pathogen - *Listeria monocytogenes*



*Listeria* is notorious for being the leading cause of death due to foodborne illnesses. It can multiply to dangerous levels in improperly stored ice cream, deli meats, cheese, milk, fruit, and vegetables. *Listeria* tolerates salt and can survive temperatures below 34 F. It is responsible for several multi-state outbreaks and can cause fever, vomiting, nausea, and muscle aches in its victims. It can also be deadly if it enters the bloodstream and causes meningitis. Those who are pregnant or have weakened immune systems are especially at risk from *Listeria*.

## Meet the auditors

In each new issue of this newsletter we will focus on a specialized team within UL Everclean®. We all have one mission: food safety! In this issue we will focus on the team responsible for the creation of this publication.

Name and territory	Education and certifications	Favorite training topic	Hobbies
 <p><b>Amy Prager, Food Safety Auditor II</b> - Oregon and Southern Washington</p>	<p>B.S. Criminal Justice, multiple subject teaching credential, PCQI, currently studying for CP-FS exam</p>	<p>Maintaining clean iced tea spouts and ice makers.</p>	<p>Volunteering for a dog rescue, Ozark, true crime junkie, Friends and I Love Lucy trivia, my dogs, and hiking through Oregon's forests in search of waterfalls.</p>
 <p><b>Nala Richards, Food Safety Auditor II</b> - Atlanta, GA</p>	<p>B.S. Biology and M.S. Public Health</p>	<p>Help ensuring hard to reach areas are clean to prevent pest activity and making sure all chemicals are labeled to prevent misuse.</p>	<p>Reading, cooking, shopping, working out, watching and playing sports and binge watching a good TV show/ movie.</p>
 <p><b>Mike Haller, Technical Manager, Food Safety</b> - Agoura Hills, CA Support Center</p>	<p>B.S. Biology, B.S. Health Science, M.S. Public Health, REHS, PCQI</p>	<p>Reduced Oxygen Packaging (ROP) and handwashing.</p>	<p>Family, adjunct professor at two universities teaching Environmental Health and Food Safety, bad dad jokes, national parks and hiking.</p>
 <p><b>Stephanie Guerrasio, Food Safety Auditor II</b> - Chicago, IL</p>	<p>B.S. Environmental Studies, M.S. Environmental Policy and Management. REHS, Licensed Environmental Health Practitioner (IL)</p>	<p>3 compartment sink use and setup and Time as a Public Health Control (TPHC)</p>	<p>Spending time outside with her husband and friends (as Chicago weather allows), her two cats, animals, gardening and cooking new recipes.</p>

To learn more about UL's Everclean® solutions, please visit us at: [CRS.UL.com/Everclean](https://CRS.UL.com/Everclean)



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