

Wauwatosa Health Department

FOOD SCOOP NEWSLETTER

Best Practices During the COVID-19 Pandemic

The following information is provided by the FDA about best practices to operate retail food stores, restaurants and pick-up and delivery services during the COVID-19 pandemic to help safeguard workers and your customers.



Managing Employee Health

- Instruct employees with symptoms associated with COVID-19 to report them to their supervisors. Instruct sick employees to stay home and consult with the local health department for additional guidance.
- If an employee is sick at work, send them home immediately. Clean and disinfect surfaces in their workspace. Others at the facility with close contact (i.e., within 6 feet) of the employee during this time should be considered exposed.
- Instruct employees who are well, but know they have been exposed to COVID-19, to notify their supervisor and follow CDC-recommended precautions.
- Inform fellow employees of their possible exposure to COVID-19 in the workplace, if an employee is confirmed to have COVID-19, while maintaining confidentiality.
- Implement workplace controls to reduce transmission among employees:
 - Employers - Pre-screen (e.g., take temperature and assess symptoms prior to starting work) and disinfect and clean work spaces and equipment, and consider more frequent cleaning of high touch surfaces.
 - Employees - Regularly self-monitor for symptoms, wear a mask or face covering and practice social distancing and stay at least 6 feet from other people whenever possible.

Personal Hygiene for Employees

- Emphasize effective hand hygiene including washing hands for at least 20 seconds, especially after going to the bathroom, before eating, and after blowing your nose, coughing, or sneezing.
- Always wash hands with soap and water. If soap and water are not readily available, then use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer with at least 60% alcohol and avoid working with unwrapped or exposed foods.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth.
- Use gloves to avoid direct bare hand contact with ready-to-eat foods.
- Before preparing or eating food, always wash hands with soap and water for 20 seconds.
- Cover your cough or sneeze with a tissue, then throw the tissue in the trash and wash hands after.

Note: The situation surrounding COVID-19 is constantly evolving. Please see our website for up-to-date information: www.wauwatosa.net

Additional Resources

- WI Economic Development Corporation - guidelines for re-opening: wedc.org/reopen-guidelines
- U.S. Food and Drug Administration - food safety during COVID-19: [fda.gov/food/food-safety-during-emergencies/food-safety-and-coronavirus-disease-2019-covid-19](https://www.fda.gov/food/food-safety-during-emergencies/food-safety-and-coronavirus-disease-2019-covid-19)
- WI Dept of Health Services - COVID-19 resources for businesses: dhs.wisconsin.gov/covid-19/employers.htm
- Centers for Disease Control and Prevention - resources for businesses: [cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/organizations/businesses-employers.html](https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/organizations/businesses-employers.html)

Single-Use Plastic Straws Prohibited in Wauwatosa

On March 3, 2020, the Wauwatosa Common Council passed an ordinance prohibiting single-use plastic straws in Wauwatosa. No establishment serving food or drinks to the public may provide a customer with a single-use plastic straw.

When does this ordinance go into effect?

July 10, 2020

Are there exceptions to this ordinance?

- Prepackaged individual serving beverages where a small plastic straw is included in the packaging
- Upon a customer's request
- Milkshakes, smoothies, or other beverages that require a large, durable straw for which a non-plastic straw would not be suitable
- Compostable straws. The City of Wauwatosa's Sustainability Committee will publish a list of acceptable compostable straws on wauwatosa.net
- Plastic straws in hospitals, nursing homes, or other healthcare facilities

How does the City enforce this ordinance?

During health inspections, City of Wauwatosa staff will remind establishments of the local ordinance related to single-use plastic straws.

How do I stay updated on other news relevant to Wauwatosa businesses?

We are building an email list of our Wauwatosa businesses and plan to send occasional updates related to resources for businesses. Sign up: wauwatosa.net/business



Spotlight on Dishwashing Machines

One of the most forgotten and abused pieces of equipment in a food facility is the dish washing machine, yet the dish machine has the critical job of cleaning dishware and reducing potential pathogens to safe levels by correctly sanitizing them. If dishes are not properly cleaned and sanitized, pathogens could persist. Not only can pathogens be dangerous, but your customers will not be happy when presented with 'dirty' dishware.

It is the responsibility of the facilities management to ensure that the dish machine is working properly at all times. Unfortunately, too many managers rely on service companies to 'check' their machines once a month. Machines must be monitored and verified daily to assure proper functionality.

Take time to review the cleanliness and operation of your dish washing machines daily. Never rely on monthly checks to do that for you. At the start of the day ask yourself: Is the machine and the area around it clean? Is the machine reaching the proper temperatures to clean and sanitize properly? If sanitizer is used, is it at the proper concentration? Is my staff today trained to work the dish room in a manner to achieve proper sanitation with no cross-contamination?

The dish machine, dish room, and yes, even the dishwasher are very important contributors to the sanitary operation of your facility. Failure to control this area could result in a foodborne illness.



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