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HOW TO IMPROVE YOUR SANITATION PROGRAM



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A top priority for restaurant owners in the new year should be an effective sanitation program. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), roughly 1 in 6 people become sick from foodborne diseases every year. With that in mind, it's important to put a proper cleaning program in place that provides a hygienic environment for both customers and staff – in 2014 and beyond.

To get started, foodservice managers must have a clear understanding of the risk factors and the level of cleanliness needed to prevent contamination of food, equipment and wares. The next step is for them to identify the various types of soil and surfaces in your restaurant to determine the proper cleaning/sanitizing products to use and how often cleaning must be done to achieve the desired results. Finally, they should create a Master Cleaning Schedule/Plan, outlining what should be cleaned, how it should be cleaned, when to clean and who should do the cleaning.

Make sure to train and educate foodservice employees on cleaning products and proper usage for each type of soil/surface, and provide periodic refresher trainings to reinforce good practices and procedures.

Kitchen Cleaning Tips

Your sanitation program should include cleaning processes for these common and sometimes-overlooked areas of the kitchen:

Baseboards – Clean baseboards frequently and effectively. These areas, particularly underneath sinks, tend to be highly contaminated with food soils and can also be moist environments that create a breeding ground for bacteria.

Countertops – Countertops are at the heart of the action. Protect against food cross-contamination with regular disinfection and maintenance. Disinfecting and sanitizing surfaces regularly can help prevent foodborne illnesses.

Cutting boards – Cutting boards need to be cleaned often, including: before use, before changing from one food type to another and after food handling is complete. Since these surfaces tend to be scored and scratched, it allows them to harbor food that can lead to bacterial growth.

Floor drains – Bacteria can often be found feeding on food residues in floor drains. These food sources can also attract other unwanted pests. Regular drain cleaning can help keep this in check.

Food preparation sinks – Clean and sanitize food prep sinks between use and throughout the day.

Greasy surfaces – Range hoods, fryers, ovens, walls and other tough greasy surfaces should be cleaned with a heavy duty degreaser to prevent a potential fire hazard. Trash and grease dumpsters should be cleaned weekly.

Also, cleaning tools such as scouring pads, brushes and mops can be sources of cross-contamination. Restaurant managers should have procedures in place to properly clean and sanitize tools regularly.

Get the Job Done Right the First Time

A recent Cleaning Industry Insights Survey from P&G Professional revealed that 65 percent of managers of cleaning operations in the foodservice industry felt products that get the job done the first time were most helpful when performing their duties.

Multipurpose products (that clean and disinfect in one step) can make cleaning easier by reducing the number of products needed and minimizing rework. This helps employees get the job done right the first time. Multipurpose products clean a broad class of soils and surfaces effectively, help save time by reducing the complexity of the job, and make staff training easier and inventory management simpler. Be sure to read label instructions for proper product usage and dwell times.

Keeping it Clean in 2014

As we embrace 2014, make it a New Year's resolution to maintain the highest standards of cleanliness in your restaurant. By evaluating your facility and equipment needs and selecting the most effective sanitizing and disinfecting products, you can have a dramatic impact on food safety, as well as staff productivity, and ultimately customer satisfaction.

In fact, P&G Professional's recent Cleaning Industry Insights Survey also showed that the most important business factor for managers of cleaning operations in the foodservice industry is "keeping customers satisfied." Cleanliness can be an important part of doing just that.