

Chapter 9 – Physical Facilities

The physical facilities or structure of a food establishment or operation must be properly designed, constructed, installed, operated and maintained to ensure adequate food safety and sanitation. Important aspects of the *Idaho Food Code* pertain to handwashing facilities, toilet facilities, other facilities and equipment, and the exclusion of pets and other animals.

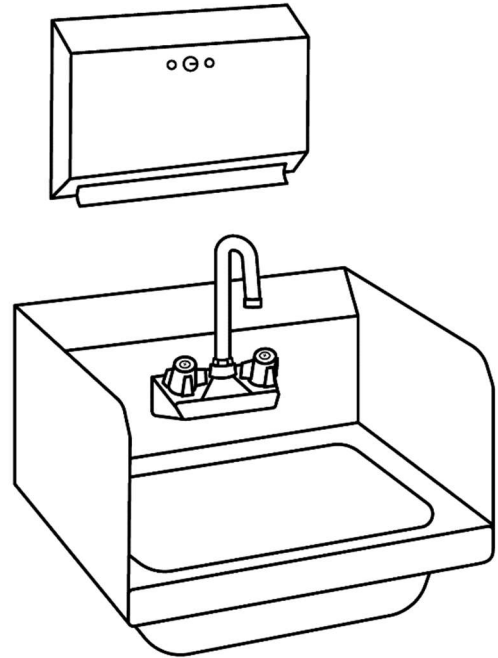
HANDWASHING FACILITIES

As stated in Chapter 6, handwashing is essential in combating foodborne diseases. Therefore, sufficient, convenient and adequate handwashing facilities must be provided. Deficiencies in any of these areas constitute public health risk.

Sufficient Handwashing Facilities.

This requirement pertains to the number of handwashing facilities and is determined by the following:

- Type of food establishment;
- Food operations within the establishment;
- Size and configuration of the food establishment; and
- The number of employees.



For the most part, the number of handwashing facilities is based on a technical review of proposed plans for new or remodeled food establishments and existing operations coupled with professional judgment, as it pertains to ***convenience and accessibility***.

A long-standing operation with insufficient handwashing facilities does not constitute a "grandfather right" for continuance.

Convenient Handwashing Facilities.

Handwashing facilities shall be so located as to be convenient to the following areas of the food establishment:

- Food preparation area
- Food processing area
- Warewashing area
- Wait person area
- In or adjacent to toilet rooms

Should handwashing facilities not be convenient, additional handwashing facilities may be required.

Handwashing facilities shall be used for handwashing purposes only.

The use of the handwashing facilities for storage purposes, dump sink, utensil and equipment washing, food prep or any other purpose makes the facility inconvenient for handwashing purposes and therefore constitutes public health risk.

Restricting easy access (by placing equipment, containers, and other items in front of the handwashing facility), even temporarily, constitutes risk and is considered a critical item violation.

Adequate Handwashing Facilities.

Handwashing facilities shall be adequate for the purpose of handwashing. Adequacy pertains to the following design requirements:

- Provided with hot and cold or controlled temperature water (90°F to 105°F) through a mixing valve or combination faucet;
- Self-closing, slow-closing or metering faucets shall provide a continuous flow of water for ***at least fifteen seconds*** without reactivating the faucet; and
- Steam mixing valves shall not be used.

In addition, handwashing facilities shall be provided with a continuous supply of:

- Hand soap or similar hand cleanser;
- Signs indicating the requirements for employees to wash hands, and
- Individual disposable sanitary paper towels; or
- A continuous towel system supplied with a clean towel; or
- A heated air hand-drying device.

OTHER FACILITIES AND EQUIPMENT

All other equipment and facilities in a food establishment must be smooth, non-porous, and easily cleanable. This includes the physical structure of the building, such as the walls and ceilings. Examples of material that is not acceptable for use as the physical structure include bare or untreated wood or untreated drywall. Use of these materials is only acceptable if the wood or drywall is treated to make them non-porous.

In addition, large equipment such as mixers or slicers must also meet the smooth, non-porous, and easily cleanable requirement. Stainless steel is one of the best materials for these types of equipment.

It is essential that equipment such as coolers be designed to be able to do the job. For this reason, most home-style equipment is not acceptable for use in food establishments. Home-style equipment generally is not designed to maintain the correct temperatures or to be used in commercial settings. For example, a home-style mixer might breakdown more quickly if it is used several times a day, every day, in a food establishment. This will result in having to replace that equipment more frequently. On the other hand, a commercial-style mixer is already designed to be used several times a day, every day, and should not only last longer and prove to be more efficient, but also will be easier to keep clean.

TOILET FACILITIES

Toilet facilities shall:

- Be provided;
- Be, not less than the number specified in the **Uniform Plumbing Code**;
- Be conveniently located and accessible to employees at all times;
- Be of a sanitary design and cleanable; and
- Be provided with a supply of toilet tissues at each toilet at all times.

EXCLUSION OF PETS AND OTHER ANIMALS

It is important to understand that pets and other animals harbor disease organisms, both internally and externally, that can be transmitted to humans. For this reason, pets and other animals are excluded from all food establishments. The only exceptions are the following:

- Edible fish or decorative fish, shellfish and crustaceans in an approved life support system;
- Live shellfish and crustaceans on ice or under refrigeration;
- Patrol dogs accompanying security or police officers in offices and dining/sales and storage areas, sentry dogs running loose in outside fenced areas, and guide dogs accompanying blind persons in dining/sales areas.

SUMMARY

- Deficiencies in handwashing facilities constitute public health risk.
- A long-standing operation without sufficient handwashing facilities does not constitute a "grandfather right" for continuance.
- Handwashing facilities are for handwashing purposes **only**.
- Placing items in or in front of a handwashing facility is a critical item violation.
- Adequate handwashing facilities consist of hot and cold or controlled temperature water, hand cleaner, and sanitary towels or heated air hand-drying device.
- Toilet facilities must be convenient, accessible and supplied with toilet tissues.
- Except for specific purposes, pets and animals are excluded from all food establishments.
- Equipment used in a food establishment must be designed to be able to do the job correctly.
- Home-style equipment is generally not acceptable for use in a food establishment.
- All surfaces of food establishments, including walls and ceilings, must be smooth, non-porous, and easily cleanable.

Reference: *Idaho Food Code*, Chapter 6