Minnesota Department of Health (MDH), Food Safety Partnership (FSP) and PWDU Quarterly Update

January 2016

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Note From the Editor

"Look for the helpers" – Fred Rogers

On December 2, 2015, a now all-too-familiar scene played out amongst public health workers in San Bernadino. Shock, anger, fear and more are human reactions to disasters and trauma. In a hyper-connected world where news and events threaten to overwhelm us, how can we know that our actions make a difference?

Mr. Rogers taught generations of parents one way to help young children deal with disaster: "Look for the helpers." While these comforting words can help anyone feel secure, as environmental health professionals, we also play another role. In many disasters, we ARE the helpers.

As you read through this issue of the Update, look for ways in which you and your agency or company can "be the helpers" for your neighbors. Help an immigrant foodworker learn how to control foodborne illness risk factors in an ethnic dish. Prevent workplace violence by learning warning signs. Have the knowledge and resources ready to provide guidance to food establishments when the power goes out.

Look for the Helpers (http://urbanlegends.about.com/od/fredrogers/ss/Mr-Rogers-Look-For-The-Helpers.htm)

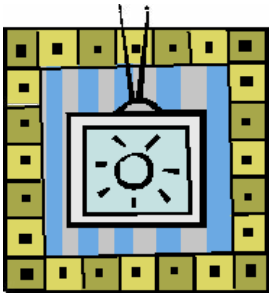
Sarah and the PWDU team

2016 Training Calendar

Date	Org.	Details
Jan. 28	MEHA	2016 MEHA Winter Conference (http://www.mehaonline.org/events/2016-meha-winter-conference) 7:45 a.m. to 4:20 p.m. University of Minnesota Continuing Education and Conference Center, St. Paul
Feb. 3	MDH/FPLS	Regulators' Breakfast 8:30 a.m. to 10:00 a.m. OLF-B107 and video-conference sites statewide
Feb. 10	MDH/FPLS/ IDEPC	Outbreaks 101 MN.TRAIN course ID #: 1061351 8:30 a.m. to 11:30 a.m. OLF-B107 and MDH district office video-conference locations Contact Kim Carlton
Feb. 10	MDH/FPLS	Risk Based Inspection Classroom Training 12:15 p.m. to 4:30 p.m. OLF-B107 Contact Michelle Messer
Feb. 11	MDH/FPLS	Risk Based Inspection Classroom Training 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. OLF-B144 Contact Michelle Messer
Feb. 12	MDH/FPLS	Equipment, Communication and Report Writing Classroom Training 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. OLF-B144 Contact Michelle Messer

Date	Org.	Details
Apr. 6	MDH/FPLS	Regulators' Breakfast 8:30 a.m. to 10:00 a.m. MDH-Mankato, OLF-B107 and video-conference sites statewide
May 4	MDH/FPLS/ FSP	Food Safety Partnership – Plus *Ebola Outbreak Response* Register through MN.TRAIN for REHS/RS continuing education *Time TBD* OLF-B107, MDH district office video-conference locations and live stream
May 11 – 13	MEHA	MEHA 2016 Spring Conference (http://www.mehaonline.org/events/meha-spring-conference)
June 1	MDH/FPLS	Regulators' Breakfast 8:30 a.m. to 10:00 a.m. OLF-B107 and video-conference sites statewide
Aug. 3	MDH/FPLS	Regulators' Breakfast 8:30 a.m. to 10:00 a.m. OLF-B107 and video-conference sites statewide
Sept. *Date TBD*	MDH/FPLS/ FSP	Food Safety Partnership *Agenda TBD* *Time TBD* OLF-B107, MDH district office video-conference locations and live stream
Oct. 5	MDH/FPLS	Regulators' Breakfast 8:30 a.m. to 10:00 a.m. OLF-B107 and video-conference sites statewide
Nov. 2	MDH/FPLS/ FSP	Food Safety Partnership *Agenda TBD* *Time TBD* OLF-B107, MDH district office video-conference locations and live stream
Dec. 7	MDH/FPLS	Regulators' Breakfast 8:30 a.m. to 10:00 a.m. OLF-B107 and video-conference sites statewide

Training Events



FSP Videoconferences

The Food Safety Partnership (FSP) is a consortium of environmental health professionals, industry partners, and other stakeholders, founded in 2001. FSP members work together to protect public health in the area of food safety.

The next FSP event will be scheduled in September 2016, date and time TBD. Agenda and registration details will be posted on the FSP Web page (http://www.health.state.mn.us/divs/eh/food/pwdu/fsp/index.html).

For registration details or site information, email Jennifer Rief (jennifer.rief@state.mn.us) or call 651-201-4508. Or visit MN.TRAIN (https://mn.train.org/DesktopShell.aspx).

Food Safety Partnership – Plus

Food Safety Partnership – Plus (FSP+) events are opportunities for the regulatory community, industry and consumers to meet and learn about current issues impacting various environmental health issues.

The next FSP+ event will be Wednesday, May 4, 2016, time TBD. In addition to our regular Epi and Rule Revision updates, the agenda will feature staff from MDH Infectious Disease Epidemiology Prevention and Control (IDEPC) division on the topic of the 2015 Ebola outbreak and Minnesota's response. Check the FSP Web page for agenda and registration details.

If you would like to receive continuing education credits for registered sanitarian/environmental health specialist RS/REHS renewal, you will need to register for the course through the MN.TRAIN system. Course ID # will be included on the posted agenda.

Regulators' Breakfast

The purpose of the Regulators' Breakfast is to establish a forum that will contribute to statewide uniformity and consistency among regulatory staff and management (local agency and MDH) in the interpretation and application of

statutes, rules and procedures. This event is for regulatory agencies. Email Sarah Leach (sarah.leach@state.mn.us) or call 651-201-4509 for more information.

The next Regulators' Breakfast will be held Wednesday, February 3, 8:30 a.m. – 10:00 a.m.

Outbreaks 101

Regulators who would like to learn more about foodborne outbreak investigations in Minnesota can register for training on Wednesday, February 10, 2016, 8:30 a.m. to 11:30 a.m. The video-conference will be hosted from OLF-B107 in St. Paul, and will be available at all MDH district offices (Bemidji, Duluth, Fergus Falls, Mankato, Marshall, Rochester and St. Cloud). Epidemiologists from the MDH foodborne diseases unit and FPLS will provide an overview of how outbreak reporting and response happens in Minnesota. This is a repeat of the session presented on December 21, 2015.

This session is available to all MDH-FPLS and delegated agency staff, but will be geared towards newer inspectors who haven't had a lot of exposure to outbreak response. There is no cost for this session.

RS/REHS continuing education credits are available for this video-conferenced event. Register through MN.TRAIN (Course ID#:1061351).

Food Safety Classroom Training

Minnesota Department of Health, Food, Pools, and Lodging Services Section (MDH FPLS) has developed and provides Food Safety Classroom Training sessions on a regular basis to inspection and management staff from MDH and local delegated health agencies. This training is provided to advance knowledge, encourage standard procedures and promote uniformity between inspection staff. It is considered "Core" training and topics covered include:

- FDA and Minnesota food codes; statutes, rules and regulations
- Proper equipment use (e.g., thermocouples and pH meters)
- Effective communication and report writing
- Risk-based inspections

Over the six days of classroom training, we build upon the learning. The last day we take what has been learned and in teams, document a complex flow chart, identify hazards and CCPs, determine applicable Minnesota food code rules, practice demonstration of knowledge in relation to the food identified in the flow chart and write a risk control plan using the examples provided.

Twenty regulators from nine agencies began the classroom training series in January, and will complete the second half of training in February 2016. Depending on need, additional training sessions may be scheduled in fall 2016. Email Michelle Messer (michelle.messer@state.mn.us) or call 651-201-3657 to reserve a spot for yourself or other staff from your agency or for information about future sessions.

All training takes place at the MDH Freeman Building in St. Paul.

Food Code Classsroom Training participants, January 2016: front (l to r) Julie Degn (Hennepin Co.), Rebecca Schmidt (Ottertail Co.), Caitlin Rosch (Bloomington), Brittny Douglas (Minneapolis), Holly Batchelor (MDH), Cassandra Hua (MDH), Claire Knocke (Olmsted Co.), John Boettcher (MDH); back (l to r) Nick Koreen (MDH), Andrew Hagmann (Anoka Co.), Clare Conte (Minneapolis), David Boberg (Bloomington), Cody Miller (Olmsted Co.), Dane Huber (Minneapolis), Nicole Olson (MDH), Ryan McGlynn (Anoka), Tony Georgeson (Ottertail Co.), Kim Shermo (Waseca Co.), Bruce Jaster (Clay-Wilkin), Kent Severson (Clay-Wilkin)

Bug of the Quarter

Legionella

Legionella bacteria can cause Legionnaires' disease or Pontiac fever, collectively known as legionellosis. The bacterium was named after an outbreak in 1976, when many people who went to a Philadelphia convention of the American Legion got sick with pneumonia (lung infection). Legionnaires' disease occurs worldwide, especially in persons over 50 years of age. Other risk factors include smoking, male gender, chronic lung disease, suppressed or weakened immune system due to organ transplant, cancer, kidney disease, or AIDS.

Legionellosis facts

Here are some Fast Facts about *Legionella* from the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC):

- An estimated 8,000 to 18,000 people need care in a hospital due to Legionnaires' disease each year in the United States.
- Most people with Legionnaires' disease will have pneumonia since the Legionella bacteria grow and thrive in the lungs.
- People get Legionnaires' disease or Pontiac fever when they breathe in a mist or vapor (small droplets of water in the air) that has been contaminated with Legionella.
- Legionellosis is not spread from person to person.
- Legionella are found naturally in the environment, usually in warm water.
- Keeping Legionella out of buildings' water supplies and cooling towers, as well as pools, hot tubs, and fountains, is key to preventing infection.
- Legionnaires' disease appears to be more common in the northeastern United States. Researchers are not certain why that is, but it is likely related to a combination of factors.

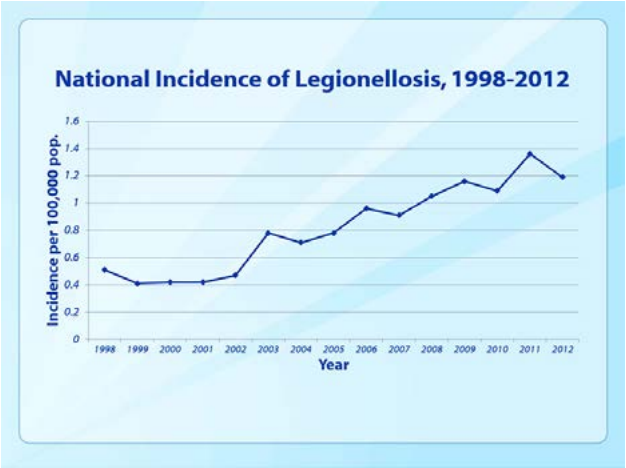
Some additional facts about treatment and severity of legionellosis can be found on MDH's fact sheet:

- Most cases can be successfully treated with antibiotics.
- The case fatality rate is generally 5-30%.

2015 Bronx Legionnaires' Outbreak

In July 2015, an outbreak of Legionnaires' disease in South Bronx, New York, claimed the lives of 12 people and sickened more than 120 people-the worst in the city's history. Many residents in the area already have asthma, diabetes, and other underlying health conditions which made them more susceptible to the illness. The source of the outbreaks was traced to a contaminated cooling tower on top of the Opera House Hotel. The hotel had opened two years earlier after a multimillion-dollar renovation of a historic theater building. Due to the severity of the outbreak, city health officials ordered that every building with a cooling tower had to disinfect it within two weeks of receiving the notice.

This graph shows reported legionellosis incidence (per 100,000 persons) in the United States from 1998-2012. During 2014, more than 4,500 U.S. cases of legionellosis (Legionnaires' disease and Pontiac fever) were reported to CDC. These numbers are nearly identical to the provisional numbers at the end of 2013. Once finalized, there were almost 5,000 cases reported to CDC in 2013.



Beginning in 2003, there has been a general increase in the incidence of legionellosis. Factors contributing to this increase might include:

- Older U.S. population
- More at-risk individuals
- Aging plumbing infrastructure
- Climate
- Increased use of diagnostic testing
- More reliable reporting to CDC

Resources

MDH About Legionnaires' Disease (http://www.health.state.mn.us/divs/idepc/diseases/legionellosis/legionellosis.pdf)

CDC Legionella Fast Facts (http://www.cdc.gov/legionella/fastfacts.html)

Legionella (Legionnaires' Disease and Pontiac Fever) (http://www.cdc.gov/legionella/index.html)

Bronx Legionnaires' Outbreak is Over (http://www.nytimes.com/2015/08/21/nyregion/health-officials-declare-end-of-legionnaires-outbreak-in-the-bronx.html?_r=0)

Emergency Preparedness

Power Outages: Key Tips for Consumers About Food Safety

In addition to food safety regulations and resources for food business safety, there are many food safety resources for consumers available from federal, state and local regulatory agencies.

The following tips from FDA will help consumers keep food safe during power outages.

Be Prepared

- Have a refrigerator thermometer.
- Know where you can get dry ice.
- Keep on hand a few days worth of ready-to-eat foods that do not require cooking or cooling, which depend on electricity.

When the Power Goes Out

- Keep the refrigerator and freezer doors closed as much as possible.
- The refrigerator will keep food cold for about 4 hours if it is unopened.
- Refrigerators should be kept at 40°F or below for proper food storage.

Once the Power is Restored

- Check the temperature inside of your refrigerator and freezer.
- If an appliance thermometer was kept in the freezer, check the temperature when the power comes back on. If the freezer thermometer reads 40°F or below, the food is safe and may be refrozen.
- If a thermometer has not been kept in the freezer, check each package of food to determine its safety. You can't rely on appearance or odor. If the food still contains ice crystals or is 40°F or below, it is safe to refreeze or cook.
- Refrigerated food should be safe as long as the power was out for no more than 4 hours. Keep the door closed as much as possible.
- Discard any perishable food (such as meat, poultry, fish, eggs or leftovers) that has been above 40°F for two hours or more.

Resources

- Power Outages: Key Tips for Consumers About Food Safety (http://www.fda.gov/Food/RecallsOutbreaksEmergencies/Emergencies/ucm077023.htm)
- Food Safety In an Emergency (http://www.foodsafety.gov/keep/emergency/index.html)
- Food Safety During Power Outages in Food Establishments (http://www.health.state.mn.us/divs/eh/food/fs/powerout.html)
- Food Safety in Emergencies (http://www.health.state.mn.us/foodsafety/emergency/index.html)

Tip of the Quarter

Workplace Violence

The shooting rampage that left 14 people dead in San Bernardino California has put a spotlight on violence in the workplace. Whether this was a workplace-motivated incident remains to be seen but, either way, workplace violence is real.

Workplace violence facts

U.S. Department of Justice Office of Justice Programs Bureau of Justice Statistics offers these facts:

- Roughly 2 million workers a year are affected by some form of workplace violence.
- In 2011, government employees had a rate of workplace violence (18.0 per 1,000 employees age 16 or older) that was more than three times the rate for private-sector employees (5.2 per 1,000).
- In 2011, excluding law enforcement and security employees, the rate of workplace violence against government employees (8.7 per 1,000) was greater than the rate for private-sector employees (4.7 per 1,000).

What is workplace violence?

Workplace violence is any physical assault or act of aggressive behavior occurring where a public employee performs any work-related duty in the course of his or her employment, including, but not limited to:

- An attempt or threat, whether verbal or physical, to inflict physical injury upon an employee.
- Any intentional display of force which would give an employee reason to fear or expect bodily harm.
- Intentional and wrongful physical contact with a person without his or her consent that entails some injury.
- Stalking an employee with the interest in causing fear of physical harm to the physical safety and health of such employee when such stalking has arisen through and in the course of employment.

Whether new on the job or experienced, you must always be alert to potential safety hazards arising from field work. You must take appropriate measures to protect yourself when hazards arise from field work itself, vehicle use, severe weather, or from contact with regulated parties, individuals with antigovernment attitudes, or criminals.

Not surprisingly, the incidents of workplace violence that make the news are only the tip of the iceberg. What its victims all have in common is that they were at work, going about the business of earning a living, but something about their workplace environment—often something foreseeable and preventable—exposed them to attack by a customer, a co-worker, an acquaintance, or even a complete stranger.

What can I do to prevent violence in my workplace?

The most important component of any workplace violence prevention program is management commitment. Employers should establish a workplace violence prevention program or incorporate the information into an existing accident prevention program, employee handbook, or manual of standard operating procedures. It is critical to ensure that all employees know the policy and understand that all claims of workplace violence will be investigated and remedied promptly.

If your agency or facility does not have a policy, now is the time to write one.

Resources

- Minnesota Statutes, section 15.86 (https://www.revisor.mn.gov/statutes/?id=15.86)
- Violence in the Workplace - Canadian Centre for Occupational Health and Safety (http://www.ccohs.ca/oshanswers/psychosocial/violence.html)
- Workplace Violence - OSHA fact sheet (https://www.osha.gov/OshDoc/data_General_Facts/factsheet-workplace-violence.pdf)
- Safety + Health (http://www.safetyandhealthmagazine.com/articles/13369-workplace-violence-prevention)
- Workplace Violence Against Government Employees, 1994-2011 (http://www.bjs.gov/content/pub/pdf/wvage9411.pdf)
- Workplace violence prevention: A comprehensive guide for employers and employees (http://www.doli.state.mn.us/WSC/PDF/WorkplaceViolencePreventionGuide.pdf)
- Safety 101: Workplace Violence (http://www.minnesotasafetycouncil.org/facts/factsheet.cfm?qs=F7B957635F2BE6F4)
- Workplace Violence: A Report to the Nation (http://www.public-health.uiowa.edu/iprc/resources/workplace-violence-report.pdf)

In the News

Cultural Foods Safety Considerations App

Advancements in technology are continually happening in environmental health. In this issue, we are featuring a new, useful food safety mobile app. As with any technology tool, installation is dependent upon the type/age of your mobile device and your employer's technology policy.

The FDA has converted its Ethnic Foods document into an app for use in the field. It's available for free in the Apple Apps Store, Google Play and Windows Store.

This application offers searchable information on food safety issues and control measures associated with specific culturally based foods. It is organized by foods by regions of the world, faith based and processes that are frequently used to produce cultural foods (e.g., salting, pickling, and fermentation). This application is for smartphones and tablet use.

Details

Every region is known for its own types of foods. The Cultural Foods Safety Considerations app can help inspectors identify foods and processes that are found at various ethnic establishments. The app has searchable information on food safety issues and control measures associated with specific culturally-based foods. It is organized by ethnic food categories and processes (e.g., salting, pickling, and fermentation) that are frequently used to produce cultural foods. Food can be found through searching the following categories:

- Foods by Region of the World
- Faith Based Foods
- Type of Process Used
- Regulatory Guidance

With Cultural Foods Safety Considerations you will be able to search for foods by:

- Region of the world (Africa, Asia, Caribbean, Europe, Hispanic, India, Mediterranean, Middle East, South America, The United States of America)
- Type of Process (Acidification, Additives, Curing, Drying, , Fermentation, Freezing for Parasite Destruction, Live Animal/Slaughter, Pickling, Salting, Smoking, Spouting, Use of High Alkalinity, Cooking Methods (e.g., Hibachi, Tandoori, Rotisserie for Formed Roast), Cooling Methods)

There are also links to various regulatory guidance sites and agencies. The information is intended as useful information to assist with inspections. It should not replace the interview/risk-based inspection. Foods can vary greatly from establishment to establishment and may not follow the definition, guidance or critical measures provided in this app.

Target audience

The target audience is federal, state, tribal, territorial, and local food regulatory officials. It is also a great resource for food establishment operators and other stakeholders.

Availability

Both smartphone and tablet applications are available.

(https://play.google.com/store/apps/details?id=com.FoodSecurity.ideon)

(https://appsto.re/us/kj8L-.i)

(https://www.microsoft.com/en-us/store/apps/cultural-foods-safety/9nblggh6cnzh)

University of Minnesota Food Policy Research Center

One Health in action: Effective collaboration between human and animal health sectors to eliminate Neglected Zoonotic diseases

Publication date: September 2015

Authors: Bernadette Abela-Ridder, World Health Organization; Kaylee Errecaborde, University of Minnesota college of Veterinary Medicine, Julia Yeri Lee, University of Minnesota School of Public Health

View or download the complete issue brief at: One Health in action (http://www.foodpolicy.umn.edu/sites/foodpolicy.umn.edu/files/neglected-zoonotic-diseases.pdf)

Summary

- Zoonoses are diseases transmitted between animals and humans.
- May zoonoses are classified as *neglected* zoonotic diseases (NZDs) due to the low priority given to them by governments, the international public health community and aid groups.
- NZDs debilitate people and limit work productivity while also decreasing the productivity and welfare of the livestock on which most poor rural communities depend.
- NZDs can be a serious drain on a country's economy, which can have wider repercussions, trapping citizens in a cycle of poverty and disease.
- The success of Rabies control efforts through evidenced-based strategies in Bangladesh, South Africa, the Philippines, and Tanzania demonstrate the feasibility of eliminating important NZD in under-resourced settings.
- Investment and aligned political will at national and sub-national levels is critically important to: promoting coordination between health sectors; continuing development of surveillance, diagnostics, and treatment methods; and to build local capacity for long term sustainability.

Rule Revision

Minnesota is currently in the process of revising the Minnesota food code, Minnesota Rules, chapter 4626, the Minnesota pool code, Minnesota Rules, part 4717.1750, and registered environmental health specialist/sanitarian rule, Minnesota Rules, parts 4695.2500 through 4695.3200. Look for more rulemaking updates in future issues.

Food Code

A team of supervisory staff from Minnesota Departments of Health (MDH) and Agriculture (MDA) continue to refine draft language in the Minnesota food code. We are completing final reviews of rule amendment drafts and are working with the Revisor to ensure correct and complete language.

Here are some upcoming tentative dates:

- New draft posted on the Web page – late January, 2016
- Public hearing – spring 2016

Please check the Minnesota Food Code Rule Revision Web page (http://www.health.state.mn.us/divs/eh/food/code/2009revision/index.html) and watch your emails for up-to-date information on the revision process.

Pool Code

The "Notice of Intent to Adopt Without a Public Hearing" (Notice) is being reviewed by MDH legal staff. It will be sent to the Office of Administrative Hearings (OAH) for review and approval by an Administrative Law Judge (ALJ). After ALJ approval, the Notice will be published in the *State Register*. Publication will start a period of at least 30 days during which people can comment on the proposed rule amendments and request a public hearing.

After the end of the comment period, assuming MDH has not received 25 or more requests for a public hearing, the entire rulemaking record will be submitted to OAH to review by an ALJ. If the ALJ approves the rulemaking process and the rule amendments, then the rule amendments can be adopted by the department.

Partnership and Workforce Development Unit Staff Contact Information

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Food Safety Partnership of Minnesota