

**Grays Harbor County
Environmental Health Division
100 W. Broadway, Suite 31
Montesano, WA 98563
(360) 249-4222**

**Guidelines for
Building and
Remodeling
Food Service
Establishments**

General Information

You recently requested information about starting or remodeling a food service establishment in Grays Harbor County. The information in this brochure is intended only to give you general information and does not take place of a plan review. A brief outline of items which you will need to consider when opening or remodeling your own food service establishment will be discussed. These items reference the rules and regulations of the Washington State Board of Health for Retail Food Service Establishments (WAC 246-215).

Please keep in mind that this information is to be used as a guideline to assist you and a plan review packet must be completed and reviewed prior to opening a food service establishment. You will also be responsible for meeting all requirements of Washington Administrative Code (WAC) 246-215 and any applicable requirements of other agencies (e.g. Building Codes, State Department of Agriculture, Liquor Control Board, etc.).

The Steps required to build or remodel a food service establishment are:

1. Obtain a Plan Review Packet for your appropriate operation
2. Submit the plan review packet, scaled plans, menu specifications and the appropriate plan review fee to the following address: Grays Harbor County Environmental Health, 100 W. Broadway Suite 31, Montesano, WA 98563
3. Construction should begin **AFTER** a plan review has been submitted and review by the Environmental Health Division
4. Submit the appropriate Permit Fee to the above department. Permit Fees are based on seating in your establishment and seat amounts will be verified prior to issuance of a permit.
5. Once all construction has been completed and equipment is placed, schedule a pre-opening inspection of the completed facility seven (7) days before the scheduled opening of the business.

As you prepare your plans, remember your attention to detail will assist staff in completing the review in a timely manner. The current fee for a plan review is \$230 for food service establishments. This covers one hour of review time and a pre-opening inspection. Should the review result in additional review time you may be charged at an hourly rate of \$95.

The plans will become a permanent record in your food service establishment file. Any changes or additions of equipment or menu will require further review.

Equipment

All equipment is required to NSF (National Sanitation Foundation) approved or equivalent. Provide all specification sheets and equipment models. Only commercial equipment is allowed in food service establishments.

Space

Provide adequate space for food preparation, cold and hot holding, cooling and reheating foods. The equipment and food must not be located under exposed or unprotected sewer lines, open stairwells, or other sources of contamination.

Equipment

All equipment and/or cabinetry must be permanently attached to floors and walls or must be easily moveable for cleaning.

Sneeze Guards

Sneeze guards are required for food service lines, buffet, self-service and salad bars.

Surfaces

Indicate the surfacing material of counters, shelving, floors, walls, ceilings and equipment throughout the establishment. All surfaces must be smooth, easily cleanable, non-absorbent and durable. Acoustic tiling is not permitted in food preparation areas.

Water

Water must be obtained from an approved source. Hot and cold running water must be provided in quantities sufficient for sanitary operation of the facility. If a municipal water system is not available, a public drinking water system must be established that complies with the drinking water standards (WAC 246-290).

Sewage Disposal

Sewage must be discharged into an approved sewage treatment system. If a municipal sewage disposal system is not available, an on-site disposal system must be designed by a licensed engineer or designer and approved by Environmental Health. Installation applications are necessary from this department. Please contact (360) 249-4222 for more information.

Plan

Complete a plan review packet and submit plans showing the entire establishment including all existing and proposed facilities and equipment. Plan review will not begin until all information is received.

Things you might take into consideration when planning are:

- Your menu. The menu you create can affect the complexity of your facility design and the equipment you will need to operate.
- Your storeroom. Is it located near the service entrance for easy delivery access and is it large enough to hold all foods you wish to serve.
- Are storage areas and refrigerators easily accessible to the cooking and serving areas.
- Are the dishes and customer's food sufficiently separated

Drawing a simple flow chart may help your basic building design.

Restrooms

Food service establishments must provide adequate, conveniently located toilet facilities for their employees. Food service establishments with indoor or outdoor seating must provide a public restroom. Restrooms must comply with local planning and building codes, have handicap accessibility and provide adequate ventilation and lighting. Additionally, restrooms provided for patrons cannot be accessed through food storage or food preparation areas.

Plumbing

All plumbing must meet Uniform Plumbing Codes. Please contact your local or county building department for specific requirements.

Handwashing Sinks are required in **all** food preparation areas and restrooms. Handwashing sinks must be located within 25 feet AND be easily accessible to all for preparation areas. Single service soap and paper towel dispensers (or air hand drying devices) are required. Both hot and cold running water must be furnished to all handwashing sinks through a mixing type faucet. A separate hand sink is required in addition to utensil washing sinks.

Dish/Utensil Washing Sinks and dishwaters must be large enough to wash, rinse and sanitize all utensils, dishes and cookware used in the establishment. The following equipment configurations are acceptable in food service establishments.

- A three-compartment sink with attached drain boards is required
- For those facilities using a mechanical dishwasher, a three-compartment is also required. One of these sinks may be used to pre-rinse dishes.

A Food Preparation Sink may be required. You cannot use the three-compartment, mop, or handwashing sink for food preparation.

Indirect Drains must be provided on food preparation and utensil washing equipment such as ice machines, walk-ins, espresso machines, three-compartment sinks and any unit used to dispense food.

Vacuum Breakers are required on all faucets with threaded hose bibs to prevent back siphoning of contaminants in to the potable water system.

Dipper Wells are recommended if hard ice cream is dispensed. Storing ice cream and serving scoops in stagnant water is not allowed. Incoming water inlet must be located above the rim of the well to prevent back siphoning.

In Bar and Taverns extra sink compartment shall be provided as the bar in addition to those necessary for normal cleaning and sanitizing of utensils and glassware.

Garbage Disposal

All garbage and rubbish containing food waste shall, prior to disposal, be kept in leak proof, non-absorbent containers which shall be kept covered with tight-fitting lids when not in use.

Adequate cleaning facilities shall be provided and each container, room, or area in which garbage is stored need to be thoroughly cleaned as needed.

If your facility plans to recycle certain materials such as cardboard boxes and food containers, please ensure adequate storage space is provided. It is also recommended your store recyclable materials under cover or in a sealed container to protect it from the weather.

Insect and Rodent Control

Good building construction is the first step in excluding pests. Keep all openings plugged or covered with a screen. Indicate provisions for the exclusion of insects and rodents in your plan review documents. All exterior and restroom doors are required to be self-closing or provided with some other means to keep insects and rodents out.

Ventilation and Lighting

Ventilation must remove heat, steam, condensate, vapor, obnoxious odors, smoke and fumes in the food preparation, dishwashing and restroom areas

Exhaust Hoods must meet uniform fire, mechanical and building codes. They must prevent grease or condensate from collecting on walls and ceilings and from dropping into food or onto food contact surfaces.

Lighting must provide a minimum of 30-foot candles in all food preparation, service, storage, equipment and utensil washing areas and restrooms. Shielded lighting must be provided in all areas of food service, preparation and storage.

Dressing Rooms

If employees are required to make clothing changes at work, dressing rooms are required. A specific place must be set aside to store coats, purses and personal belongings.

Food Worker Cards

Food worker cards are required by legislative law within fourteen (14) days of hiring employees who handle food and food service items, including management and dishwashing personnel. Grays Harbor County offers a Food Worker Class the **FIRST** Thursday of each month. Registration for this class begins at 2:30pm and class starts at 3:00pm sharp. The location of the class is in the Pearsall Building Large Meeting Room at 2109 Sumner Avenue in Aberdeen Washington. The cost for this class is \$10.00. No appointment is necessary.

Class is also offered at any time on-line and a link can be found at www.co.grays-harbor.wa.us. You must have access to a working printer and a debit or credit card.

If you have any questions about the information given in this guideline, please contact us at (360) 249-4222.