

MOBILE FOOD FACILITY OPERATOR'S HANDBOOK



A Guide for Safe Food Handling Practices in a Mobile Food Facility

Introduction

The Food and Housing Division (FHD) of the Department of Environmental Health (DEH) is responsible for regulating more than 12,000 retail food businesses in the County of San Diego, including over 1200 mobile food facilities. FHD's Food Safety Program implements an excerpt of the Health and Safety Code, the **California Retail Food Code**, to protect the County's more than 3.1 million residents and 15 million of overnight visitors.

FHD implements its Food Safety Program in the whole County and routinely inspects the mobile food facilities operating in the 18 cities and the unincorporated area. Safe food management practices are of utmost importance in a mobile food facility. Practicing food safety helps operators prepare and serve food in a wholesome manner that protects the customer's health. It is everybody's responsibility to be safe food handlers and help reduce the occurrence of foodborne illness.

The Food Safety Program is designed to reduce risk factors that contribute to food borne illness. This booklet will provide mobile food facility operators with a basic understanding of the principles of public health and food safety. It will also explain the food safety inspection process, including the report used to evaluate and grade mobile food facilities. The information in this guide will provide operators with the necessary tools to look at their food handling practices and identify opportunities to improve all aspects of their food handling process, including preparation, storage, transportation and service.

The types of mobile food facilities inspected by FHD include: coffee carts, shaved ice carts, tamales carts, hotdog carts, produce trucks, ice cream trucks, lunch trucks and gourmet trucks. When mobile food facilities apply for their Health Permit, along with their permit application, they are required to submit written operating procedures. Following these procedures helps them conduct their food operations safely. The type of vehicle and its food preparation equipment determine the type of food handling operators are allowed to conduct under their mobile food facility Health Permit. In this document we will discuss the permit requirements for the different types of mobile food facilities and provide the information you need to successfully incorporate food safety practices into your operations.

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Registered Environmental Health Specialists regularly inspect all retail food facilities in the County of San Diego to protect the health of residents and visitors of the County. FHD's Food Safety Program focuses on preventing risk factors identified by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) as contributing to foodborne illness, and decreasing the incidence of the most common violations identified during FHD's inspections that may also play a role in foodborne illness. The five major risk factors and top five violations listed below are related to employee behavior and food preparation practices:

Center for Disease Control 5 Major Risk Factors	Food and Housing Division Top 5 Violations
1. Improper holding temperatures	1. Improper holding temperatures
2. Poor personal hygiene	2. Hand washing facilities not accessible or improperly supplied
3. Inadequate cooking	3. Lack of food handler training
4. Contaminated equipment	4. Contaminated food contact surfaces
5. Food from an unsafe source	5. Lack of hot and cold water

During inspections, FHD's Specialists focus on the five major risk factors and the top five violations to help mobile food facility operators identify areas where there are factors that may increase the risk of foodborne illness. Monitoring and controlling these risk factors, is key to having a safe food operation. Operators can successfully improve the safety of their operations by having written sanitation and maintenance procedures, training their employees on these procedures and actively implementing procedures in their day to day operations.

Understanding the Mobile Food Facility Inspection Report

FHD's Environmental Health Specialists will use a graded inspection report specially designed to evaluate your mobile food facility. The points assigned to violations noted during the inspection are based on the food safety risk factors. At the completion of the inspection, the Environmental Health Specialist will:

1. Review the results of the inspection with the mobile food facility operator.
2. Discuss the violations and advise operator of the necessary actions required to correct violations and prevent recurrence.
3. Issue a score and grade card for those mobile food facilities that conduct limited and full food preparation.

The Department of Environmental Health has a long history of collaboration with stakeholders, using the educational approach to communicate during inspections. Environmental Health Specialists work with operators to gain voluntary compliance whenever possible and issue an inspection report before leaving the facility. The inspection report details violations noted and the corrective action required to bring the facility into compliance with State law and the County Code.

This handbook provides an explanation of the main sections of the Mobile Food Facility Inspection Report and is a great resource for operators. You can use this guide to help you meet the Health Permit requirements applicable to your operations. The following food safety requirements are outlined on your inspection report:

- Demonstration of Knowledge
- Employee Health and Hygiene
- Time and Temperature Relationship
- Protection from Contamination
- Food from Approved Sources
- Water/Hot Water Supply
- Liquid Waste Disposal
- Facilities/Equipment/Utensils
- Vermin Control
- Operations
- Compliance and Enforcement

Understanding Your Grade and Grade Card Posting Requirements

Mobile food facilities that conduct limited or full food preparation will be issued a grade card when they are inspected. Each facility starts the inspection with 100 points, and when violations are noted, points are deducted. The final score determines the grade card posted at the end of the inspection, as described below:



Grade A: 90 to 100 points – Satisfactory Compliance

Facility is in satisfactory compliance with the requirements of the Health Permit. The Specialist will add to the comments section of your inspection report any directions that may help improve your operations.

Grade B: 80 to 89 points – Improvement Needed

Facility needs improvement in operational procedures or equipment and/or corrections to structural deficiencies. If you receive a grade B, you will be issued an official notice outlining the violations and required corrective action.

Grade C: below 80 points – Failing Grade

Facility requires major changes or improvement. An official notice of violations detailing required corrections will be issued when a facility earns a grade of C.

Grade cards shall be conspicuously posted during all hours of operation. Facilities operating without their posted grade card may be subject to further administrative remedies or legal action. **Mobile food facilities shall post a notice advising customers that a copy of the most recent inspection report is available upon request.**

Re-grade Inspections

A mobile food facility receiving a grade of "B" or "C" must receive a passing "A" grade within 30 days of being degraded. Failure to earn back an "A" grade within 30 days can result in suspension or revocation of their Health Permit or in immediate closure. All re-inspections are subject to a re-inspection fee. Depending on the type of violation, some operators may be ordered to correct in less than 30 days a deficiency found during the inspection of their mobile food facility.

When an imminent health hazard is observed during an inspection and cannot be immediately corrected, the mobile food facility will be ordered closed and their Health Permit temporarily suspended until the violation is corrected.

Demonstration of Knowledge

Knowledge is the foundation of safe food handling practices. The County of San Diego requires all food facility workers that handle food or utensils to complete food safety training. Food handlers that complete food safety training gain a basic understanding of food safety practices. See below for a description of required food safety training:

A. Food Safety Certification

All food facilities that handle unpackaged potentially hazardous foods are required to have a Person in Charge who has passed an approved Food Safety Certification exam.

This Certification:

- Is valid for five years
- Must be kept at the mobile food facility
- Can only be used at one mobile food facility
- Meets and exceeds the food handler test requirement

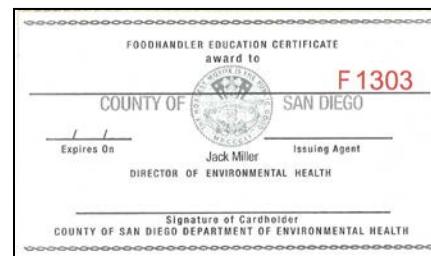


B. Food Handler Cards/Tests

In the County of San Diego all people who prepare food, serve food, wash dishes, or in any way touch unwrapped food or utensils are required to possess either a valid **food handler card** issued by a county-authorized food handler training school or a County of San Diego **food handler test**. This test can only be administered by their current food safety manager who has a valid state-approved Food Safety Certification.

Food handler cards/tests:

- Are valid for three years
- Must be kept at the mobile food facility
- Can be obtained by:
 - Successfully completing a 3-hour food handler's class from a County-approved school.
 - Passing a County-issued food handler's test given by the mobile food facility owner or an employee if they have a current Food Safety Certification.



C. Additional Resources

A list of approved food handler and food safety certification providers can be obtained from:

- FHD's website: <http://www.sdcountyfoodhandlers.org>
- Food Handler Information: (858) 505-6900

Employee Health and Hygiene

A. Employee Health

Sick employees can be the cause of a foodborne illness. Food Employees should **notify** the Person in Charge when they experience symptoms such as:

- **Diarrhea**
- **Fever**
- **Vomiting**
- **Jaundice (yellowing of skin or eyes)**
- **Sore throat with fever**
- **Lesions (cut or open sore)**

The Person in Charge must take appropriate steps to prevent foodborne illnesses and notify FHD's Foodborne Illness Desk at (858) 505-6814 when they become aware of an employee who has been diagnosed with a reportable disease.

B. No Smoking

Food handlers are not allowed to smoke in the kitchen area or any area where food or utensils are handled or stored.

Post a No Smoking sign in kitchen area.



C. Hand Washing / Good Hygiene

Employees shall thoroughly wash their hands and arms at the hand washing sink by vigorously rubbing them with soap and warm water for at least 20 seconds.

Wash hands:

- Before returning to work
- Before putting on fresh gloves
- Before handling food, equipment, utensils and when changing tasks
- After handling uncooked or raw food
- After using the toilet
- After breaks and before returning to work
- After eating or smoking
- After sneezing, coughing or blowing your nose
- After any possible contamination

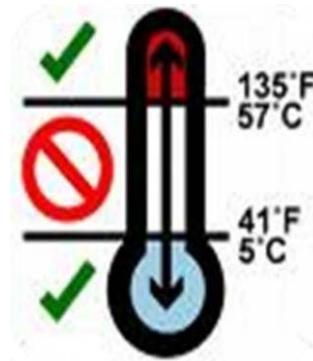


Hand Sink Requirements in a Mobile Food Facility:

- **Dimensions:** Minimum of 9"x 9" with a depth of 5"
- **Accessible:** Easily accessible by all food employees
- **Water:** Warm water of at least 100°F provided by a water heater interconnected with the potable water supply
- **Supplies:** Hand soap and paper towels in permanently mounted dispensers
- **Location:** Separated from the warewashing sink by a 24" space or a 6" high metal splashguard

Time and Temperature Relationship

Bacteria that cause food poisoning grow and multiply to dangerous levels when allowed enough time in the **temperature danger zone**. The temperature danger zone is above 41°F and below 135°F.



A. Potentially Hazardous Foods (PHF)

Potentially Hazardous Foods are those that require time or temperature control to limit the growth of harmful, disease-causing and toxin-forming bacteria. Meat, poultry, seafood and raw eggs are all PHF. Other PHF items include cooked vegetables, garlic in oil, sliced melons and tomatoes. All PHF items shall be kept cold at or below 41°F, or if COOKED, at or above 135°F.

Mobile food facilities are required to have mechanical refrigeration inside the vehicle to hold potentially hazardous food **cold**. The conditions below must be followed:

- Cold holding temperatures must always be 41°F or less, with the exception of raw shell eggs, and unopened containers of pasteurized milk and milk products which can be stored between 41°F and 45°F.
- Hot holding is allowed at mobile food facilities approved to do full food preparation. Temperatures for potentially hazardous foods at steam tables or other hot holding equipment must always be 135°F or higher.
- Hot holding is not allowed for mobile food facilities approved for limited food preparation.
- Potentially hazardous food held at or above 135°F must be destroyed by the end of the business day.
- All cold potentially hazardous foods should be returned to and stored at the commissary or destroyed at the end of the business day.
- Every refrigerator must have an accurate thermometer. The thermometer must be placed in the warmest part of the refrigerator.
- Food must be promptly prepared in small batches to minimize the time it is held at room temperature.
- Temperature recording logs should be used and maintained to make sure all equipment is functioning correctly.

B. Probe Thermometers / Thermocouple Thermometers

Probe or thermocouple thermometers are required for checking internal food temperatures while heating, before serving, when holding hot and when storing it in refrigeration units. Thermometers are also required for checking water temperatures. They can be purchased at restaurant equipment suppliers.



- A probe thermometer or thermocouple thermometer must be readily available to accurately measure internal food temperatures, including temperatures of thin foods, such as meat patties and fish fillets.
- Food temperature measuring devices that are scaled only in Fahrenheit shall be accurate to $\pm 2^{\circ}\text{F}$ in the intended range of use.

C. Proper Reheating Procedures for Hot Holding

Food that has been prepared and precooked in an approved kitchen shall be reheated rapidly to a minimum internal temperature of 165°F on a cooking unit. A mobile food facility that is allowed to prepare food shall:

- Not use steam tables or other hot holding units for reheating or cooking.
- Not use equipment in the mobile unit for cooling cooked potentially hazardous food.
- Discard at the end of the day all food that has been kept at or above 135°F.

D. Cooking Temperatures

All ready-to-eat foods prepared in the mobile food facility from raw or incompletely cooked meat or poultry shall be thoroughly cooked prior to serving.



Be sure to:

- Use a probe thermometer to the check internal temperature of foods when reheating or cooking them.
- Always clean and sanitize thermometers before and after each use.
- Follow the required cooking temperature to kill bacteria in raw and cooked foods.
- Notify customers verbally or in writing if you are serving potentially hazardous food that is raw or incompletely cooked.

Food Item	Required Internal Temperatures for Cooking
Cooked fruits and vegetables for hot holding	135°F
Single pieces of meat beef, veal, lamb, game animals, and pork	145°F for 15 seconds
Comminuted meats, such as hamburger; Raw Eggs for later service	158°F
Chicken, duck, turkey; stuffed fish, meat or poultry	165°F for 15 seconds
Roasts (beef, pork and ham)	130°F or as specified in the California Retail Food Code Section 114004

E. Proper Thawing

Keep frozen foods in a frozen state until ready for preparation. Frozen foods, once thawed, cannot be refrozen. There are four safe ways to safely thaw frozen food products:

1. In a refrigerator, at 41°F or below.
2. Under clean, running water at a temperature of 70°F or lower, under constant monitoring (this method may not be practical for mobile food facilities) as part of a cooking procedure. Food must reach the required minimum internal cooking temperature during cooking.
3. In a microwave oven, if the food will be cooked immediately after thawing.
4. As part of cooking process.

Mobile food facilities may have limitations using some of the thawing techniques because of water capacity and space constraints inside the vehicle. Follow approved operational procedures to reduce mishandling of food. Thawing is not allowed on mobile food facilities only approved for limited food preparation.

Protection of Food from Contamination / Food from Approved Sources

To reduce the risk of foodborne illness, it is very important to ensure that food items are obtained from an approved source and are protected from contamination. Unsanitary food contact surfaces on utensils and equipment are a documented risk factor that can cause of foodborne illness outbreaks. Food debris and accumulation of bacteria (biofilm) stuck on surfaces of poorly cleaned or sanitized utensils get onto food items that are prepared with these utensils.

A. Equipment Manual Washing and Sanitizing

Food utensils and equipment must be washed and sanitized properly in approved warewashing sinks. An approved warewashing sink with at least three (3) compartments and integral drain boards on both ends shall be installed in a mobile food facility that prepares food. Sink compartments shall be large enough to accommodate the cleaning of the largest utensil used in the mobile facility. Minimum dimensions shall be 10" x 14" or 12" x 12" and have a depth of at least 10".

Proper procedure for warewashing and sanitizing:

Scrape off grease and food particles on the utensils before washing/sanitizing them in the approved three compartment sink as follows:

1. **WASH** utensils in the first compartment filled with a wash solution that consists of detergent and hot water. Wash solution shall be maintained at 100°F or at the temperature specified on the detergent label instructions.
2. **RINSE** utensils in the middle compartment with clear water. Refill sink compartment if water cools or gets cloudy.
3. **SANITIZE** utensils in the last compartment filled with sanitizing solution using one of the following methods:
 - Contact with a solution of 100 ppm available chlorine solution for 30 seconds.
 - Contact with a solution of 25 ppm available iodine for one minute.
 - Contact with a solution of 200 ppm quaternary ammonium for one minute.

Use test strips to determine if the concentration of sanitizer in the third sink compartment is correct.
4. **AIR DRY** utensils on the drain board at the clean end of sink.

B. Approved Source

All food wholesale warehouses and distributors in the County are required to have a valid Health Permit issued by DEH. When purchasing the food you will prepare in your mobile food facility, remember that:

- All food must come from an Approved Source.
- An invoice for the food purchase can be used as proof of a food source.
- Food shall not be prepared nor stored in a private home.
- Food shall only be purchased from a reputable distributor who is permitted, licensed or registered with a food regulatory agency. Raw or processed meat and poultry products must have the USDA approval stamp.
- **Packaged soft or aged cheese should be properly labeled and purchased from an approved restaurant, market or warehouse.**



C. Compliance with Shell Fish Tags

Shellfish is defined as edible pieces of fresh or frozen oyster, mussel, clams and scallops or edible portion thereof, except when the scallop product consists only of the shucked adductor. Shellfish certification tags/records must be kept for 90 days after receipt. Establishments that sell, serve, or give away raw oysters harvested from the Gulf Coast states (Louisiana, Florida, Texas, Alabama and Mississippi) must comply with California's regulations:

- Shell stock shall have complete certification tags and shall be properly labeled. Shellfish stock without tags may be impounded
- A shellfish TAG shall be kept with the shell stock until all are sold.
- Shell stock TAGS must be maintained for 90 days in mobile food facility for review after they are sold.
- Establishments must meet the following seasonal ban and warning requirements for the sale of raw Gulf Oysters:
 - **November to March** – WARNING signs with information regarding the health risk of consuming RAW GULF OYSTERS shall be made available to consumers before they make an order. Samples of the warning signs can be downloaded from:
http://www.sdcounty.ca.gov/deh/food/pdf/publications_oystersigns.pdf
 - **April to October** – No raw, untreated Gulf Oysters shall be served.

D. Food Display and Service

- No food shall be stored, prepared, displayed or served outside of a mobile food facility.
- Condiments and sauces shall be dispensed from protected containers.

E. Spoilage/Contamination/Adulteration

- Inspect food for signs of spoilage such as damaged containers or spilled product.
- Also inspect food for contamination such as particles in ice, insects in grains, ants in sugar and mouse droppings in flour.
- **Prevent cross-contamination:** Cross contamination occurs when harmful bacteria are moved from one food item to another by non-food items, such as cutting boards or knives that have not been washed and sanitized, or by storing or thawing raw meat and poultry above other foods.
- When handling food, wash your hands often to avoid cross-contamination, especially after handling raw food or dirty utensils, such as a knife used for cutting raw chicken.
- Minimize bare hand and arm contact with unpackaged food by using scoops, forks, tongs, wrappers, gloves or other implements to assemble or serve.

F. Food Storage

- Always store prepared or ready-to-eat foods in a manner that prevents contamination, such as storing vegetables above raw meat, poultry and fish.
- Store all food in a manner that protects it from dirt, vermin and juice droplets from other products, overhead leakage or any other contamination.
- Ensure that commissaries or facilities have adequate storage space for all of their mobile food units.
- Maintain articles of clothing and other personal items stored in a separate area or in compartments away from food.
- Label all chemicals or cleaning supplies and store them separate from food, utensils, packaging material and food-contact surfaces.



G. Labeling

Prepackaged foods must be labeled in accordance with the Sherman Food, Drug and Cosmetic Law. Any food that is not properly labeled is deemed to be misbranded. All prepackaged foods must be labeled in English with the following information:

- Common name of the food.
- Name and address of manufacturer or distributor.
- Net quantity – by weight or count.
- List of ingredients in descending order by weight.
- Nutrition facts (if required).



Water and Sewage

Mobile food facilities shall have hot and cold running water, under pressure, available at all time for all sinks. Mobile food facilities must close when potable water is not available. While operating, ensure that:

- Hot water is kept at a minimum temperature of 120°F.
- Water tanks and plumbing are constructed of food grade material as approved by an ANSI accredited testing organization for drinking water.
- Water tanks are cleaned, flushed and disinfected as often as necessary.
- Plumbing is kept in good repair without any leaks.



WATER HEATER

Minimum required sizes for potable water and waste water tanks

Type of Tank	Water use	Required Tank Size		
		Non potentially hazardous food	Limited Food Preparation	Occupied Mobile Food Facility
Potable Water Tank	Hand sink	5 Gallons	5 Gallons	5 Gallons
	Warewashing sink	Not Applicable	15 Gallons	25 Gallons
Total Potable Water Tank Requirement		5 Gallons	20 Gallons	30 Gallons
Waste Water Tank	Hand sink	7.5 Gallons	7.5 Gallons	7.5 Gallons
	Warewashing sink	Not Applicable	22.5 Gallons	37.5 Gallons
Total Waste Water Tank Requirement		7.5 Gallons	30 Gallons	45 Gallons

Additional waste water tank capacity may be required where waste water production is likely to exceed tank capacity. An additional waste water holding tank shall be provided with a capacity equal to one-third of the volume of the ice cabinet to accommodate the drainage of ice melt.

Liquid Waste Disposal

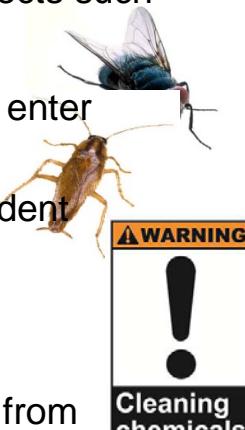
All plumbing and plumbed tanks must be maintained in good condition.

- Liquid waste from equipment such as steam tables, ice machines and refrigerators must also drain properly into waste water tanks. No buckets or pans should be used to capture waste water.
- Waste water lines shall be maintained free of leaks. Sinks shall drain freely.

- Cross-connection control or backflow prevention devices must be installed and in good repair.
- Tanks must be adequately vented for flow.
- Removable tanks shall be labeled “potable” or “waste” to avoid confusion.
- The operator should have written sanitation operating procedures for servicing potable water and waste water tanks.
- Waste water back-ups must be immediately corrected. The mobile food facility should not operate until the plumbing is replaced and all surfaces have been cleaned and sanitized.
- Mobile food facilities shall close when the tanks are full and cannot hold additional waste water.
- Waste water shall be discarded into approved dump stations.

Pest Control and Animals

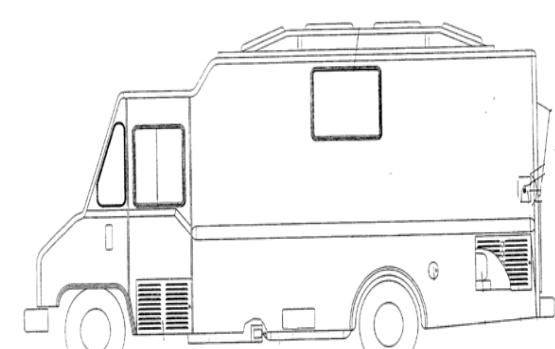
The mobile food facility must be free from cockroaches and other insects such as flies, as well as rodents. To maintain your facility free of vermin:

- Eliminate all openings into facility where insects or rodents can enter (i.e. open doors or holes on walls).
 - When receiving products, always inspect them for insects or rodent damage.
 - Pesticides, chemicals and cleaning supplies must always be labeled and used in accordance with the instructions.
 - Store pesticides, chemicals and cleaning supplies separate from food, utensils, packaging material and food-contact surfaces.
 - **NO ANIMALS** – No pets or animals shall be allowed inside the mobile food facility.
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Keeping the mobile food facility, equipment and utensils clean and in good repair assists in reducing food contamination and vermin harborage.

Facilities / Equipment / Utensils

A. Exterior Requirements

- All doors to the mobile food facility food preparation area and service openings must be self closing.
 - The food service pass through windows cannot exceed a maximum of 216 square inches and must be at least 18 inches apart.
 - All windows must be screened with a least a 16" mesh screen.
 - Propane tanks shall be properly vented and located outside of the mobile food facility.
 - The business name or name of the operator, city, state, zip code and name of the permittee, if different from the name of the mobile food facility, shall
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be legible, clearly visible to consumers and permanently affixed on the consumer side of the mobile food facility.

B. Floors, Walls & Ceilings

- All floors, walls and ceilings must be free of grease, dirt and debris.
- Windows, screens, exhaust vents, fans, areas around conduits and floor mats shall be maintained clean.

C. Height and Width Requirements



- During normal business operations, occupied mobile food facilities shall have a clear, unobstructed height of at least 74 inches from floor to ceiling over the aisle portion of the unit and a minimum of 30 inches of unobstructed horizontal aisle space.

D. Fire Safety Requirements

- A 10 BC-rated fire extinguisher must be available and inspected annually by the fire department.
- A first aid kit must be available and stored in a convenient location away from food.
- A secondary emergency exit measuring 24 by 36 inches must be accessible.
- Coffee urns, deep fryers, steam tables and similar equipment shall have positive closing lids, fitted with secure latch mechanism to prevent excessive spillage of hot liquids into the interior of facility in the event of a sudden stop, collision or overturn.



E. Lighting and Ventilation Requirement

- Adequate lighting shall be provided throughout the facility.
- All light bulbs shall be shielded, coated or otherwise shatter-resistant in areas where there are exposed food, equipment, utensils, linens, unwrapped single-service and single-use articles.
- Exhaust ventilation equipment, fans, grease baffles, suppression systems and vents shall be provided and shall be kept clean and operational.

- Mechanical ventilation for all units with cooking equipment must meet and be maintained to the Uniform Mechanical Code requirements.

F. Equipment and Utensils

- All new and replacement equipment and utensils shall be certified or classified for sanitation by an American National Standards Institute (ANSI) accredited certification program.
- Utensils and other items must be clean and free of grease, lipstick, scum and food debris after washing. Damaged and worn-out utensils should be discarded. Dishes should be free of cracks and chips.
- Food contact surfaces of utensils, such as cutting boards, that are subject to scratching and scoring, shall be resurfaced when they are not cleanable or discarded if they cannot be resurfaced.
- All non-food contact surfaces shall be cleaned frequently to prevent accumulation of dust, dirt, food residue or other debris.
- Multi-use towels must be stored in a labeled sanitizer bucket with approved sanitizer solution.
- Dirty towels or other soiled linens shall be stored in designated containers away from food preparation and in commissary storage areas.

G. Refuse

- All food waste and rubbish shall be discarded in water-proof disposable bags and contained in leak proof container with tight fitting lids.
- Food waste and rubbish shall be removed and disposed of in a sanitary manner as frequently as necessary to prevent the creation of a nuisance.

H. Required Signs / Permits

- A health permit decal is required and must be posted in a conspicuous location.
- A hand sink is required to have a sign or poster that notifies food employees to wash their hands and shall be clearly visible.
- Graded mobile food facilities shall post their grade card in a location visible to the public during hours of operation.
- Grade card shall not be camouflaged with any signage or advertisement.
- A certification insignia issued by the CA Department of Housing and Community Development (HCD) is required on a mobile food facility that is occupied and has 110 volt electrical, plumbing, a gas appliance/equipment or a mechanical generator or compressor. Contact HCD at (951) 782-4420 for additional information.
- The mobile food operator must verify with other local and state agencies for other permits that may be required in the area the mobile food facility is conducting business.



Compliance



A. Requirement for a Commissary

All mobile food facilities are required to operate in conjunction with a commissary or a permanent food facility that has been approved by all authorized agencies.

Mobile food facilities shall be stored at or within a commissary or other approved location in order to have protection from unsanitary conditions. These facilities shall be cleaned and serviced at least once during an operating day.

A Commissary must have a valid Health Permit and provide the following services for all mobile food facilities that have contracted their services:

- Food preparation areas for cooking and/or packaging of food for sale or service in a commissary used by mobile food facilities with full scale food preparation.
- Adequate refrigeration space to meet the cold food storage needs from all mobile food facilities that have a service agreement with them.
- Adequate dry storage space.
- A three-compartment sink with cold and hot running water at least to 110°F.
- Sufficient electrical outlets to plug in refrigerator/freezer for all units.
- Sufficient water spigot connections with backflow prevention devices for all units using their facility.
- Approved waste water discharge area with a grease trap interceptor (must contact waste water department for approval).
- Grease container for grease from deep frying equipment (if applicable).
- Adequate trash dumpsters with lids.
- Numbered parking for all mobile food facilities that are stored at commissary.
- Servicing area for cleaning of the vehicle or cart.

Commissaries have special designation for specific mobile food facilities services. A mobile food facility must have written approval prior to changing commissary.

B. Restroom Facilities

- A mobile food facility that does business at an approved location for more than 60 minutes shall have access to a toilet room located within 200 feet of the mobile food facility. The toilet room shall be completely enclosed and provided with a tight-fitting and self-closing door.
- Toilet facility shall be clean, in good repair, and located in a commercial facility.

- Hand wash sinks shall be provided with single service liquid or powder hand soap and paper towels in dispensers.
- Toilet paper shall be available in proper dispensers.
- **Restroom Letter:** A stationary occupied mobile food facility is required to submit a letter to the Department of Environmental Health for review and approval of restroom use. A Port-a-potty is not approved as a restroom for stationary occupied mobile food facilities.

C. Standard Operating Procedure Required in Unenclosed Stationary Mobile Food Facilities, such as coffee carts and carts with limited food preparation. A cart shall provide written sanitation standard operating procedures to operate on a daily basis. The written procedures shall include instructions on how to properly:

- Clean and sanitize utensils and equipment.
- Fill up potable water tank.
- Dispose of waste water
- End of business day food storage procedures.
- Maintenance of equipment protocol.
- Clean interior and exterior of mobile food facility.
- Dispose of used grease from fryer.
- Dispose of garbage.

To obtain a fillable form for complete your sanitation standard operating procedures, call (858) 505-6900 or go to:

http://www.sdcountry.ca.gov/deh/food/pdf/publications_plancheckmff_oppcedures.pdf

D. Plan Check

Remodeling or making significant changes to the structure, equipment or menu requires department approval. Typical changes that require department approval are:

- Change of owner.
- New equipment installed on mobile food facility.
- Change in menu or food process.
- Location of business, if mobile food facility conducts business for longer than 60 minutes.

Contact your Area Specialist with any questions regarding changing your operation or physical changes to your mobile food facility. Major changes will require plans and clearance from the Department of Environmental Health plan check and construction unit (858) 505-6660.

Enforcement

A. Official Notice

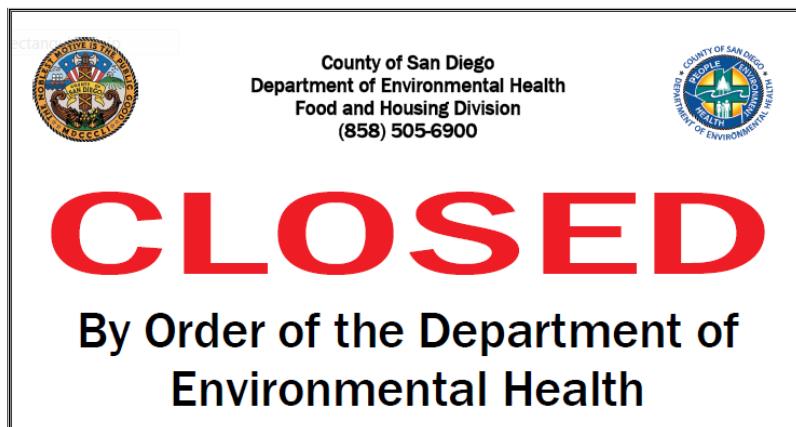
An official notice of violation will be issued whenever an Environmental Health Specialist (EHS) observes significant violations. The notice will include a list of violations with a specified time required to make corrections. A copy of your most recent inspection report must be available for review upon request by the public. Contact your EHS if you need clarification of these requirements or suggestions for correction.

B. Closure / Hearing

Closure of a food mobile facility will be required when the food operation poses a threat to the health of the public or facility personnel. Examples of situations requiring closure include but are not limited to:

- Sewage backing up or inadequate waste water disposal.
- No hot or cold water under pressure available.
- Inadequate refrigeration for potentially hazardous food.
- Serious and repeated risk factor violations.
- Lack of a restroom facility with hand washing sink not within 200 feet of mobile food facility that is operating in a location longer than 60 minutes.
- Mobile food facility operating without a valid commissary.

A closed mobile food facility must remain closed until the Department of Environmental Health has granted approval to re-open. Be advised that a hearing, revocation of health permit, administration fees and/or further legal action may result as an intervention to correct repeat violations.



Mobile Food Facility Operations

A. Types of Mobile Food Facility Operations

1. Prepackaged mobile food facility or whole produce mobile food facility. The operation must be conducted under a permitted mobile food facility or from a single site. Prepackaged food means any properly labeled processed food or whole produce, prepackaged or stored to prevent any direct human contact with the food product. Examples of these operations are produce or ice cream trucks and paleta carts.



2. Single operating site mobile food facility means at least one, but not more than four, unenclosed mobile food facilities and their auxiliary units that operate adjacent to each other at a single location. A single operating site mobile food facility is restricted to produce, prepackaged food and limited food preparation. A single operating site mobile food facility is required to provide ware washing and hand washing facilities per site or operation. Ware washing sink may be shared by not more than four mobile food facilities operating as a single operating site mobile food facility. The ware washing and hand washing sink contained in a facility must be conveniently located so as to be accessible during all hours of operation.



3. Occupied mobile food facility means a mobile food facility that is occupied during normal business operations and is fully enclosed. All food preparation other than limited food preparation must be within an occupied mobile food facility.

B. Limited Food Preparation

Limited food preparation means food preparation that is restricted to one or more of the following activities:

- Heating, frying, baking, roasting, popping, blending or assembly of non-prepackaged food.
- Bulk food dispensing of non-potentially hazardous beverages.
- Slicing and chopping of food on a heated cooking surface during the cooking process.
- Cooking and seasoning to order.



- All open food shall be held in an approved “food compartment.”

Limited food preparation does NOT include:

- Slicing and chopping, unless it is on the heated cooking surface.
- Thawing food in mobile food preparation.
- Cooling of cooked potentially hazardous food.
- Grinding raw ingredients or potentially hazardous food.
- Reheating for hot holding.
- Washing of foods.
- Cooking of potentially hazardous foods for later use.



For limited food preparation, utensils shall be restricted to spatulas, tongs

scoops, and/or spoons. Examples of mobile food facilities that are allowed to do limited food preparations are the following types of carts:



- Hot Dog
- Coffee
- Churro
- Pretzel
- Shaved Ice

Mobile Food Facility - Zoning Information

The Department of Environmental Health approves mobile food facilities that comply with all of the requirements of the CA Health & Safety Code. The operator is responsible to know other requirements in the cities where business will be conducted. Below you will find some information about the different cities in San Diego County and the telephone numbers to call for additional information.

County of San Diego, Dept. of Planning and Land Use	Allowed – Private property zoned for commercial use; Must not impact parking spaces designated for private property.	(858) 565-5981
Carlsbad	Allowed - parking 10 min.	(760) 602-2494
Chula Vista	Allowed - max. parking 10 min; Need business license	(619) 585-5621
Coronado	Single Operating Site only with approval from City	(619) 522-7305
Del Mar	Not Allowed	(858) 704-3651
El Cajon	Allowed	(619) 441-1782
Encinitas	Allowed with approval from Zoning Dept/Business Permit	(760) 633-2710
Escondido	Only Cold Food Trucks Allowed	(760) 839-4659
Imperial Beach	Temporary Basis Only - Need a Temporary Outdoor Sales Permit; Business License/Seller's Permit required	(619) 628-2381
La Mesa	Allowed – Need business license	(619) 667-1348
Lemon Grove	Allowed – Need business license; cannot park within 50 ft. of an existing restaurant	(619) 825-3800
National City	Allowed – Business License & Annual Food Vending Permit. Not within 500 ft of a school; Public area – not to exceed 10 min., and next stop must be 300 ft away; Private property – may only sell to property owner or his employees	(619) 336-4341
Oceanside	Minimum 500 ft from an existing restaurant	(760) 435-3520
Poway	Allowed – Need a Solicitor's Permit	(858) 668-4600
San Diego	Allowed – Private Property only with property owner approval; Need a Business License	(619) 446-5000
San Marcos	Allowed - Need Business License	(760) 744-1050 ext. 3204
Santee	Allowed – Need Business License/Solicitor's Permit	(619) 258-4100 ext. 146
Solana Beach	Allowed – Need a Solicitor's License	(858) 720-2403
Vista	Allowed – Need a Business License; Truck needs a Safety Inspection from City	(760) 639-6141

Department of Environmental Health Food and Housing Division

Location

San Diego Office

5500 Overland Avenue, 1st Floor
San Diego, CA 92123
(858) 505-6900
Hours: 8:00 am – 4:30 pm, M-F

Contact Information

Technical Questions	(858) 505-6900	fhdutyeh@sdcounty.ca.gov
Report a Foodborne Illness	(858) 505-6814	fhdepi@sdcounty.ca.gov
Sanitation Complaint	(858) 505-6903	fhdcomplaints@sdcounty.ca.gov
Temporary Food Events	(858) 505-6809	fhdtempevents@sdcounty.ca.gov
Plan Check Tech. Questions	(858) 505-6659	plnchk@sdcounty.ca.gov
Permit Questions	(858) 505-6666	fhdpermits@sdcounty.ca.gov
Plan Check Scheduling	(858) 505-6660	plnchk@sdcounty.ca.gov
Food Handler Questions	(858) 505-6900	fhdutyeh@sdcounty.ca.gov