Retail Food Establishments: Mobile Food Establishments

Chapter 9-1

A mobile food establishment consists of a commissary and mobile food unit(s). Both the commissary and all mobile units must be permitted separately. Chapter 9-1 addresses all requirements for mobile food.

Five Key Risk Factors repeatedly identified in foodborne illness outbreaks:

1. Improper Holding Temps
2. Inadequate Cooking
3. Contaminated Equipment
4. Food from Unsafe Sources
5. Poor Personal Hygiene

3 and 5 are addressed on this sheet.

Mobile Food Units & Pushcarts

» Identification: Mobile food units and pushcarts shall have their business name, commissary permit number, commissary name, commissary address, and printed 3” high on the unit; see 9-1 (L)(12) for more information.

» Handwashing Sinks: Mobile food units and pushcarts shall have a separate handwashing sink.

» Items/Articles: Only single-service utensils, bowls, plates and other containers are to be provided to the customer.

» Service: Customer self-service of unpackaged Time/Temperature Control for Safety (TCS) food is prohibited.

» Water Source: All units and pushcarts shall use an approved drinking water system.

» Water Capacity: Each cart system shall have a capacity of 5 gallons or greater.

» Wastewater Storage: Wastewater shall be stored in a tank that is 15% larger than the units/carts water supply. Removable tanks may not be larger than 10 gallons. If a permanent tank is used, there is no limit on capacity.

» Wastewater Disposal: Wastewater shall be flushed and drained only at the commissary.

» Storage: Mobile food units and pushcarts shall return to the commissary after each day of operation and be stored onsite.

» Inspections: Mobile food units and pushcarts shall be available for inspection at the commissary at any reasonable time when requested by DHEC.

Mobile Food Units

» Definition: Fully enclosed mobile kitchens that may prepare, cook or serve TCS food as a mobile food establishment.

» Food: Preparation of bulk food, including washing, slicing, peeling, and cutting shall occur at the commissary.

» Doors: SHALL remain closed at all times.

» Service Window: No more than 2 feet x 2 feet, covered with solid material or screen, and be self-closing or covered by air curtain.

» Ventilation: Mechanical exhaust equipment shall be provided over all cooking equipment to effectively remove cooking grease, heat, vapors and etc.

Mobile Food Pushcarts

» Definition: Limited food service units that operate as a direct extension of a commissary.

» Food: All food preparation, including washing, slicing, peeling, cutting, and cooking shall occur at the commissary.

» Construction: Must have preparation and display areas completely enclosed, unless located indoors or serving boiled/steamed hotdogs or ice cream and approved by DHEC.

» Manager Certification: Pushcarts are exempt from the requirements of 2-102.20

Commissary

» Definition: A permitted retail food establishment that is authorized by DHEC to provide support of operations, storage, and a servicing area for mobile food units or mobile food pushcarts.