



The Basics of Tavern Sanitation



Ice and drinks are considered food and if they become contaminated through careless handling or unsanitary surroundings customers can get sick, just as they can from mishandled food in restaurants. This is why your tavern is inspected by the Health Department. The guidelines in this booklet are designed to protect your customers and your business.



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Getting Started

Your facility must be inspected before you open. The Health and Building inspectors will verify that all bar fixtures (ice bins, ice machines, sinks, etc.) are properly plumbed and of adequate number, and that all equipment is approved for commercial foodservice use. Plans for new facilities must be submitted and approved before the start of construction.

Buyer Beware!

Only the Health Department can determine whether or not a facility meets current standards. Don't rely on information from others when buying or opening a new business.

Serving Food

You do not need a food license to put out free popcorn, cheese, crackers, chips, pretzels, or cold cured sausage.

If you plan to serve prepackaged whole frozen pizzas or microwave sandwiches you must obtain a food license.



If you plan to serve any type of food that is not prepackaged (hot dogs and Polish sausage, cold cuts, buffets or appetizers) you must obtain a food license. Plans and additional equipment may be required.

Employee Hygiene

Hand washing is as important in taverns as it is in restaurants. Ice, snacks, drinks, and the surfaces of glasses are not heated like many foods and heat is used to kills germs. If bartenders do not wash their hands after using the toilet, taking out the garbage, or sneezing, they can transmit diseases such as Hepatitis A, Shigellosis, and others.

Make it convenient to wash hands. Keep soap and disposable towels behind the bar at the hand sink. Make sure restrooms are always supplied with soap and single service towels. Post hand washing signs and keep all restroom fixtures clean.



Be sure to handle ice and glasses correctly. Hold only the outsides of glasses and be sure to not stick your fingers in them when carrying. Do not use glasses to scoop ice. Minimize hand contact and the risk of glass breaking by using a durable ice scoop with a handle. Store scoops with handles out of the ice so you do not have to dig for them, which could possibly contaminate your product. For the same reason, do not store bottles in the drinking ice bin.

Glass Washing

Glasses must be washed, rinsed, and sanitized. After dumping residues and straws from them into the garbage, place in pre-wash sink, then wash with soap, warm water, and brushes in a wash compartment.

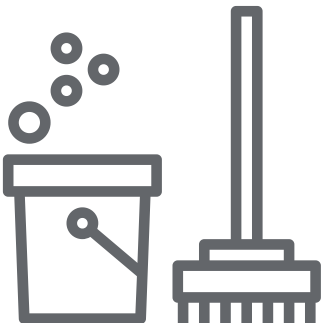
Rinse in the center sink using plain water, then immerse in a sanitizer solution (approved product or bleach at the recommended strength) in the last tank.

Don't rinse again after sanitizing! Allow glasses to air dry on a clean drain board. Don't towel dry or store on towels.



Good Housekeeping

Good Housekeeping makes common sense, but the basics need repeating. Empty waste containers daily and do not neglect rubber floor mats when sweeping and mopping.

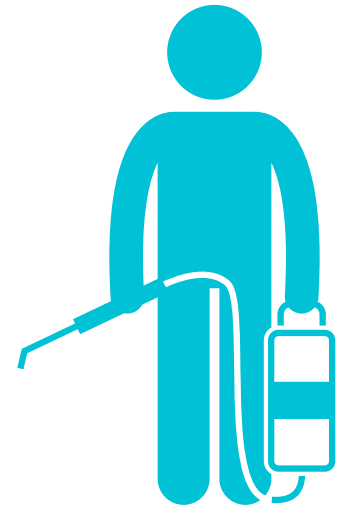


Check ice machines and bins for signs of build-up and follow manufacturer's rules for cleaning and sanitizing them. Make a schedule for cleaning soda guns, holsters, coolers, sinks, and drain boards.

Rodent Control

Insect and rodent control is both an economic and sanitation concern for food service establishments. Infestations of insects and rodents destroy food supplies and may contaminate food with agents of foodborne illness.

In most cases, pest control can best be handled by a professional pest control company. Pest control technicians must be certified by the State of Wisconsin. A good pest control contract will include the pest control technician reporting both verbally and in writing any evidence of infestation to a manager and advising on preventative measures, such as rodent proofing and sanitation. (Be cautious of services offering very low prices.)



The Wisconsin Food Code considers pest control a critical item and states that the presence of insects, rodents, and other pests shall be controlled to minimize their presence on the premises by:

1. Routinely inspecting incoming shipments of food and supplies.
2. Routinely inspecting the premises for evidence of pests.
3. Using methods, if pests are found, such as trapping devices or other means of pest control.
4. Eliminating harborage conditions.

The Wisconsin Food Code also states that dead or trapped birds, insects, rodents, and other pests shall be removed from control devices and the premises at a frequency that prevents their accumulation, decomposition, or the attraction of pests.

Exclusion is the best defense. Seal all holes in exterior walls/foundations, including spaces around utility lines. External doors should be tight-fitting and self-closing.

Eliminate Shelters. Keep the outside free of garbage piles, cardboard, or other debris. Inside, remove all unnecessary stored materials. Remaining materials should be kept at least 6"-8" above the floor.

Eliminate Food. Garbage should be stored in rodent-proof containers (with tight fitting lids) at all times. Reduce the availability of water by eliminating dripping faucets and any other exposed sources of water. Replace all defective sewer pipes and seal any other openings such as clean-outs.

Doing this will help eliminate fruit flies and other unwelcome pests. Your neighbors and customers will appreciate well-maintained grounds.

**For more information on the basics of tavern safety
visit: www.westalliswi.gov/health**