

Hot & Cold Food Temperatures

Lesson Description:

This lesson explains the importance of keeping foods safe by identifying the temperatures in the temperature danger zone.

Lesson Objectives

At the completion of the lesson the participant will be able to:

1. Take active steps to reduce the amount of time food is held in the temperature danger zone.
2. Know what logs are in use and how to use them.

STEP 1 –Why do we have a “Temperature Danger Zone”??

Temperature maintenance of food and equipment is very important for food safety. We know that bacteria grow very rapidly between 41 °F and 135 °F—the temperature range known as the temperature danger Zone. At every step from receiving to serving, it is important to limit the time that food is in the temperature danger zone.

The temperature danger zone is the temperatures between 41 °F and 135 °F in Arizona & Texas / 41 °F and 140 °F in New Mexico . This is the temperature range in which bacteria multiply most rapidly. If food is held in the temperature danger zone for too long, bacteria counts can grow high enough to cause a foodborne illness. That is why foodservice employees take active steps to reduce the amount of time food is held at these temperatures.

It is important to keep food safe when stored in the refrigerator. These some ways that will help ensure safe food during refrigeration and serving.

- Refrigerated food should be stored at 41 °F or below. Temperatures of the refrigerator and food should be checked and documented routinely.
- At the serving step, hot food should be kept at 135 °F (AZ & TX) / 140 °F (NM) or above and cold food should be kept at 41 °F or below. Cooling and reheating should be done as quickly as possible to limit the time that the food is in the temperature danger zone.

STEP 2 – Food Temperature Record Keeping

(Printed examples for attendees of logs in use at your site would be great)

There are many tools in the kitchen area to monitor food temperatures. Among these are the following:

- Logs for monitoring storage temperatures such as –
 - Dry Storage Log
 - Refrigeration Log
 - Freezer Log
- Logs for use during food prep and service such as –
 - Cooking Log
 - Hot & Cold Holding Log
 - Service Log
- What are other logs that we are using to maintain safe food temperatures throughout our storage, production and service to our customers?

STEP 3 – Review location and proper use of each log we utilize in our kitchen

STEP 4 – Discussion - How can we watch over food temperatures more consistently?