

Food Safety Fact Sheet

Mechanical Dishwashing

INTRODUCTION

Dishmachines are used in most school nutrition programs to clean and sanitize dishes, small wares, and utensils. School nutrition employees must use the dishmachine properly and monitor that the machine is working properly to ensure proper sanitation.

HERE ARE THE FACTS

Dishwashing is a three-step process: wash, rinse, and sanitize. Sanitizing can be done with the use of either hot water at the proper temperature or chemical sanitizers at the appropriate concentrations. If sanitizing is not done appropriately, cross contamination can occur.

APPLICATION

Clean and sanitize dishes, small wares, and utensils using proper dishwashing procedures.

- Follow state and local health department requirements.
- Follow manufacturer's instructions regarding use of chemicals for cleaning and sanitizing.
- Refer to the Safety Data Sheet (SDS) provided by the manufacturer if you have questions about use of specific chemicals.
- Use the dishmachine correctly.
 - ◇ Check with the dishmachine manufacturer to verify that the information on the data plate is correct. Refer to information on the data plate to determine wash, rinse, and sanitizing (final) rinse temperatures; sanitizing solution concentrations; and water pressures, as applicable.

Reminder: Always wash hands before handling clean and sanitized dishes, equipment, and utensils. NEVER load dirty dishes and then handle clean dishes without washing hands.

Monitor cleaning and sanitizing of dishmachines.

- Inspect food contact surfaces of equipment and utensils visually to ensure that surfaces are clean.
- Monitor use of dishmachine on a daily basis.
 - ◇ Monitor visually to see if the water and interior parts of the machine are clean and free of debris.
 - ◇ Monitor the temperature and pressure gauges to ensure that the machine is operating according to recommendations on the data plate.
 - ◇ Ensure that food contact surfaces reach a surface temperature of 160 °F or above if using hot water to sanitize. Check the temperature gauge on the machine, but also do a secondary check using a heat sensitive tape or irreversible registering temperature indicator to ensure that appropriate temperatures for sanitizing are reached.
 - ◇ Check the sanitizer concentration of the rinse water in chemical dishmachines using appropriate test strips.





Mechanical Dishwashing cont.

Take corrective action to make sure cleaning and sanitizing is done properly. Follow your Standard Operating Procedure.

Remember, follow state or local health department requirements.

References

- U.S. Department of Agriculture, Food and Nutrition Service, & Institute of Child Nutrition. (2015). *Food safety in schools*. University, MS. Author.
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- U.S. Department of Health and Human Services Public Health Services, Food and Drug Administration. (2013). *FDA food code*. Retrieved from <http://www.fda.gov/food/guidanceregulation/retailfoodprotection/foodcode/ucm374275.htm>

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