

## NEWSLETTER

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### MORSELS

A PUBLICATION OF THE MEDINA COUNTY HEALTH DEPARTMENT ENVIRONMENTAL DIVISION FOOD PROTECTION PROGRAMS

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## DON'T INCLUDE "SAM" AND "ELLA" ON YOUR GUEST LIST!

In 2010, Medina County recorded 32 cases involving *Salmonella*. See the chart below for other reported Medina County food illnesses in 2010. *Salmonella* is an organism that can cause diarrhea, fever, and abdominal cramps. In severe cases, death can occur due to complications of infection. The following practices should be implemented to prevent salmonellosis:

1. Wash hands with warm, soapy water prior to handling food.
2. Store raw animal foods separate and below cooked, ready-to-eat foods to prevent possible cross-contamination (transfer

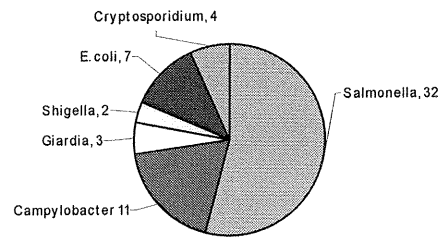
of raw meat juices to foods like lettuce, cheese, deli meats, cooked foods, etc.)

3. Thoroughly wash and sanitize hands and surfaces (counters, cutting boards, etc.) after contact with raw meats.
4. Thoroughly cook meats and egg dishes (155° F

for eggs and 165° F for poultry).

5. If a recipe includes raw eggs or undercooked eggs, consider using a pasteurized egg product instead. Never serve the elderly, young children, or persons with chronic illnesses raw or undercooked meats or eggs.

2010 Foodborne Illness Cases in Medina County



## FEELING ILL?

When should employees be excluded from food handling activities? Unscramble the letters to find the symptoms (see back for answers):

- ❖ mngitovi
- ❖ adaerihr
- ❖ reso ahtrot dna vefre
- ❖ dacijune

## WHAT IS CROSS-CONTAMINATION?

Cross-contamination refers to the transfer of bacteria from one surface to another surface. Cross-contamination can occur 3 different ways:

**People-to-Food** contamination occurs when people transfer bacteria from their hands onto food. To prevent this type of cross-

contamination, always wash hands thoroughly with soap and water for 15 seconds before preparing food, after handling raw meat, and any other time contamination occurs.

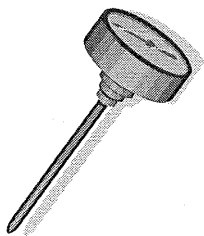
**Surface-to-Food** refers to when a contaminated surface such as a soiled cutting board or dirty knife contacts food. To prevent this type of cross-contamination, always use clean equipment and utensils that have been properly washed, rinsed, and sanitized.

**Food-to-Food** cross-contamination occurs when raw meats drip, splash, or touch other foods during storage, display, or preparation. To prevent this type of cross-contamination, always store raw meat separate from each other (i.e. fish separate from chicken) and from other foods. Store raw meats on the bottom shelf in the refrigerator. Use separate cutting boards to prepare vegetables and raw meats.



## LEVEL ONE FOOD SAFETY TRAINING

A basic food handler's course approved by the State of Ohio can be found online at [www.servsafe.com/starters](http://www.servsafe.com/starters). This interactive course is great for those just starting out or those who would like a refresher on food safety. The course fee is \$15. Be sure to print a certificate upon completion of the course!

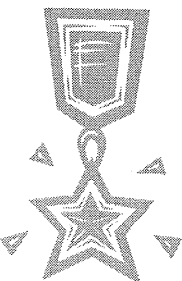


## WHAT'S IN A LABEL?

Food must be from approved sources and properly labeled. Operations that package food on premises for consumer self-service must have labels in order to provide pertinent information to customers. Labeling information must include the following:

1. Name of the food.
2. List of ingredients in descending order of predominance by weight.
3. Quantity of contents.
4. Name and place of business of the manufacturer, packer, or distributor.
5. Nutritional labeling, if applicable (i.e. nutrient claim such as fat free).

Packaged raw beef and chicken must also be labeled with safe handling instructions. Unpasteurized juices must bear a warning statement. Talk to your inspector if you have questions about proper labeling.



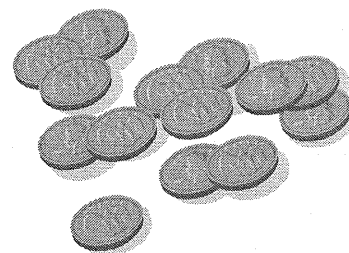
## CONGRATULATIONS!

Each year, the Medina County Health Department recognizes those operators who perform duties in an exceptional manner, as outlined in the Ohio Uniform Food Safety Code, to prevent critical food handling violations. Award recipients receive a certificate that can be displayed in the food service operation or retail food establishment. Recipients and award criteria are posted on the Medina County Health Department website at [www.medinahealth.org](http://www.medinahealth.org). Awards for the 2010-2011 licensing year will be available early spring.

**Congratulations** to Sarah Burkholder, food inspector with this office, who passed the State of Ohio Sanitarian Registration exam in August 2010! The state exam includes all aspects of environmental health to prevent illness within the community, including but not limited to: air quality, water quality, solid waste, sewage treatment, foodborne illness prevention, pools, and school safety. All inspectors in the food programs must complete 18 hours of continuing education each year to maintain their credentials.

## LOOSE CHANGE: VENDING INSPECTIONS

Did you know the Medina County Health Department inspects vending machine locations that dispense sandwiches, ice cream, frozen foods, coffee, unbottled pop, and bulk water? 50% of vending machine locations are inspected annually to ensure food products are properly labeled and stored at proper temperatures. Inspectors also determine if equipment is in good repair, food contact surfaces are cleaned and sanitized, and machines are free from insect or rodent infestations.



## REFRIGERATOR FEVER

Does your refrigerator have a fever? Better cool it down! Actually, refrigerators with temperatures above 41°F are no joke. Foods held above 41°F can promote growth of microscopic organisms that can cause a foodborne illness. Install thermometers in the warmest area of all refrigeration units to monitor ambient air temperatures in order to quickly identify any problems and prevent food spoilage.



Questions?

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Feeling Ill? Answers: vomiting; diarrhea; sore throat and fever; jaundice (yellowing of skin and eyes).