

SAN LUIS OBISPO COUNTY HEALTH AGENCY



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Food Facility Award of Excellence

Environmental Health Services has initiated an incentive program for food establishments which identifies and awards a certificate to food establishments that routinely exhibit excellent food safety and sanitation practices. Food establishments included in the Award of Excellence Program are broken down into two categories.

About the Award of Excellence

Questions:

1. What are the two categories for the Award of Excellence?
2. How do I qualify for the Award of Excellence Program?
3. What is a Critical Violation?
4. In what manner and how often is the Award of Excellence certificate issued?
5. How will my facility be identified as an Award winner?
6. When will the Award program start?

Answers:

- 1. What are the two categories?**
 - Low Risk Facilities
 - Medium and High Risk Facilities
- 2. How do I qualify for the Award of Excellence Program?**
 - Low Risk Facility- Did not receive any violations (1-52) on the routine inspection therefore the facility received an overall score of 100.
 - Medium and High Risk Facility – Did not receive any critical violations (1-23) on the routine inspection and the facility received an overall score of 98 or greater.
- 3. What is a critical violation?**
 - A critical violation is any violation that is likely to present a risk to the public's health and safety such as employee practices and hygiene, time and temperature relationships, lack of hot water, vermin infestation, etc. These items are numbered 1–23 on our inspection reports.

4. In what manner and how often is the Award of Excellence certificate issued?

- Following a regular inspection, if a food facility has been determined to exhibit excellent food safety and sanitation practices, the Environmental Health Specialist will issue the Award of Excellence certificate to the food facility at the time of the inspection.

5. How will my facility be identified as an Award winner?

- First, the facility will be issued a certificate at the end of the regular inspection starting January 1, 2012.
- Second, Environmental Health will post the names of the facilities receiving the award on our web site in February the following year.

6. When will the Award program start?

- This office will start issuing the Award of Excellence on January 1, 2012.

RISK CATEGORIES

San Luis Obispo County Environmental Health has grouped most food facilities into three categories based on potential and inherent food safety risks. The categories are low, medium and high and describe food operations that determine your facilities risk. The facility will be categorized based on your most risky operation. A few examples are provided.

1 (Low Risk)

- Prepackaged nonpotentially hazardous foods
- Nonpotentially hazardous foods dispensed or served from bulk
- Whole or trimmed produce
- Convenience store operations
- Coffee or cocoa-based beverages that may contain cream, milk, or similar dairy products, to be made and immediately served to the customer
- Popcorn
- Food that does not require temperature control for safety
- Facilities that heat only commercially processed, potentially hazardous foods for hot holding
- No cooling of potentially hazardous foods
- Establishments that would normally be grouped in risk category 2 but have shown through historical documentation to have achieved active managerial control of foodborne illness risk factors

Examples: Farm stand, AM/PM, some grocery stores, coffee shops, produce stands, Bed & Breakfast, donut shops, hot dog carts, etc.

2 (Medium Risk)

- Schools not serving a highly susceptible population
- Quick service operations
- Retail food store operations not included in category 1 or 3.
- Limited menu/limited food service operations
- Products are prepared/cooked and served immediately
- Complex preparation of potentially hazardous foods
- Establishments that would normally be grouped in risk category 3 but have shown through historical documentation to have achieved active managerial control of foodborne illness risk factors

Examples: Fast food restaurants, sandwich shops, pizza shops, bakeries, satellite food distribution facilities.

3 (High Risk)

- A full service restaurant with extensive menu and handling of raw ingredients
- Complex preparation including cooking, cooling, and reheating for hot holding with many potentially hazardous foods
- Hot holding for more than two hours of potentially hazardous food with two or more ingredients
- Preschools
- Hospitals
- Nursing homes
- Establishments that serve a highly susceptible population
- Establishments that smoke, cure, perform reduced oxygen packaging for extended shelf-life
- Establishments that would normally be grouped in risk category 2 but have **not** shown through historical documentation to have achieved active managerial control of foodborne illness risk factors

Examples: Full service restaurants, sushi facilities, large buffet type facilities with multiple ingredients, Full service grocery store with multiple units (i.e. deli, bakery, fish, meat, hot food to go, etc).