

Overcoming Challenges - Cold Holding

Food establishment management and staff often encounter many challenges with regards to maintaining food at proper cold holding temperatures and you may be able to relate.

3-501.16(A)(2) of the 2013 FDA Food Code states that time/temperature control for safety food shall be maintained at 41°F or less.

Common Challenges

There are many challenges associated with cold holding, but three main root causes can be directly correlated to controlling this hazard:

Staff Behavior

- Availability of properly calibrated thermometers
- Failure to monitor temperatures and report problems
- Relying on refrigerator air temperature rather than internal food temperatures

Refrigeration Equipment

- Trusting that the equipment will always work properly
- Lack of regular maintenance
- Overfilling unit so as to not allow for adequate air flow
- Placing recently prepared (warmer) product into smaller refrigeration equipment

Management Behavior

- Staff not being informed of any pertinent information when shift changes occur
- Lack of accountability by staff to follow up on tasks
- Employees not trained to properly use thermometers
- Management does not make time to monitor employees in kitchen

Overcoming Challenges

There are effective options to consider when overcoming cold holding challenges.

- Create Policies**
- Train Staff**
- Verify Policies are Working**

