



“A” for Food Safety

Maricopa County Environmental Services Department’s (MCESD) grading system provides an “at a glance” indication of how food establishments perform as a result of their required, unscheduled food safety inspections. This system is designed to grade the food establishments in terms of food safety requirements and acknowledge those that do well on their inspections.

The issuance of grade cards to food establishments is based on voluntary participation per inspection. The manager or designated person in charge, present at the time of the inspection, will be asked whether they would like to **“participate”** in the Grading System. This will be decided prior to **each** inspection. If an establishment does not participate in the Grading System, the term **“Not Participating” or NP** will appear on the inspection report and the inspection will still occur. If an establishment does participate, a grade of **A, B, C, or D** will be determined at the conclusion of the inspection using the Grading System Chart (see below). Citizens can also use this chart to determine the grade earned when an establishment does not participate. The grade is determined by the number of Priority, Priority Foundation and Core violations received at the time of inspection. These violation types are defined in general terms below:

“Priority items (P)” are directly related to foodborne illness. e.g. – Improper handwashing procedures

“Priority foundation items (P^f)” are the building blocks which control for priority items. e.g. – Lack of handwashing soap

“Core items (C)” are good sanitation practices that are not directly related to foodborne illness. e.g. – Leaky pipe under the hand wash sink

The establishment which participates will then be provided with a grade card that can be posted in the establishment. The status of the establishment’s grade will also appear on the Department’s Mobile and Website Restaurant Ratings page.

For more details and to access restaurant and other establishments’ food inspection reports and grades received, please visit our [website](#) or go the **Mobile Restaurant Ratings** page. To contact Maricopa County Environmental Services Department you may also call (602) 506-6616.

Grading System

		Priority Foundation Violations				
Count of Violation(s)		0	1	2	3	4+
Priority Violations	0	A	B	B	C	D
	1	B	B	B	C	D
	2	C	C	C	C	D
	3+	D	D	D	D	D

•Four or more Core violations drops one grade level
 •Any legal action for a pattern of non-compliance or permit suspension results in a D

