



**WACO-McLENNAN COUNTY
PUBLIC HEALTH DISTRICT**
Environmental Health Division
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CONSTRUCTION GUIDELINES FOR FOOD ESTABLISHMENTS

This list is only a guideline and it does not replace the Texas Food Establishment Rules (TFER) and city ordinances. The permit holder and the person in charge of an establishment are responsible for the knowledge and application of ALL current food codes.

I. Outdoor Facilities

- A. Parking Lot, walk areas, and service areas:
 - 1. Constructed of proper materials (asphalt, concrete, etc.)
 - 2. Sloped to properly drain.
- B. Dumpsters and outside refuse storage areas
 - 1. Receptacles adequate in size and number to contain all garbage and refuse produced by establishment. Contact the local garbage collection service for other requirements.
 - 2. Must be on a smooth, durable, cleanable surface (concrete or thick layer of asphalt) that is curbed and sloped to drain to collect and dispose of liquid wastes and wash water. Provide specific details for liquids disposal methods. No discharges to gutter, street, or storm water drain allowed. Contact the local building official for any other requirements.
 - 3. A dumpster / refuse storage information sheet is available upon request.
- C. Building exterior
 - 1. Constructed of weather-resistant materials.
 - 2. All outer openings protected, screened, or sealed to prevent entry of rodents, insects, and other pests.
- D. Outdoor water connections
 - 1. Should be provided for cleaning outside areas.
 - 2. Back flow prevention devices provided as required by local plumbing code.

II. Indoor Facilities

- A. Plumbing
 - 1. Air gaps (supplemental handout available for examples). The following equipment must have an air gap:
 - a. Ice bin
 - b. Mechanical dishwashers
 - c. Steam tables
 - d. Sinks as required by local plumbing ordinance

2. Grease Traps - as required by local plumbing ordinance and wastewater utility ordinance. Trap location must be easily accessible for servicing and cleaning.
 3. Back flow prevention and cross connection control devices - as required by local plumbing ordinance. Required devices for carbonators, drink machines, hose bibbs, etc.
 4. Floor drains – when installed are adequately constructed to drain properly, properly trapped, and covered to prevent rodents and other pests from entering establishment.
 5. Hot water heaters:
 - a. All facilities must have hot and cold running water.
 - b. The capacity must be large enough to provide hot water to the kitchen and all sinks at all times, including peak business hours.
- B. Sinks - at least five types of sinks are required:
1. Hand wash sinks:
 - a. Adequate in number and location to be accessible by employees in food service, food preparation, and ware washing areas. Sinks are designated for hand washing only.
 - b. Supplied with hot and cold running water through a mixing valve, hand soap, and a hand drying system. Provide hand wash signs.
 2. Mop sink or curbed floor basin supplied with hot and cold running water.
 3. A three-compartment sink (with hot and cold running water through a mixing valve) for dish washing. Must have adequate drain boards or tables for air-drying of clean equipment and utensils and an adequate pre-scrape or pre-soak setup.
- C. Dishwashing machines (if used) - must use a chemical sanitizer or a hot water sanitizing step with water at least 171° F. A dishwashing machine can be in addition to, but not in place of, a three-compartment sink.
- D. Utility service lines and pipes cannot be exposed unnecessarily.
1. Horizontal lines cannot be installed on the floor.
 2. Installation of lines cannot obstruct the cleaning of the ceiling.
- E. Ventilation must be adequately provided to keep rooms free of excessive heat, steam, condensation, vapors, obnoxious odors, smoke or fumes by means of:
1. Ceiling exhaust vents.
 2. Vent-a-hoods (Contact local fire department for additional requirements.)
 3. Heating/ air conditioning units
- F. Toilet rooms
1. Self-closing mechanism required on the door.
 2. Ventilation must be adequate (see E above)
 3. Hand sinks must be setup the same as hand washing sink described in B above)
 4. Floor drains (see A (4) above)
 5. Customers are not allowed to pass through food storage, food preparation, and ware washing areas to access a toilet room.
 6. The Health District does not regulate A.D.A. rules. Consult local city ordinances regarding number, size, and accessibility requirements.
- G. Refrigeration and freezing equipment (including walk-ins)
1. Freezers: inside air temperature is required to be at 0° F or lower. Install thermometers.
 2. Refrigerated storage. All foods in refrigerated storage will be required to be at 41°F or colder. In order to keep food at this temperature, the air temperature will probably need to be at least 2-3 degrees lower than this (38-39° F). Each unit must have a thermometer.
- H. Employee break rooms/dressing rooms - must be completely separate from all food storage, food preparation, and ware washing areas.

- I. Proper lighting:
 - 1. Kitchen - 50 Fc at the surface where employees are preparing food & using food equipment.
 - 2. Dry Storage and walk-in coolers - 10 Fc at 30 inches above the ground.
 - 3. Restrooms, hand washing, ware washing areas, self service areas, storage, and buffet lines - 20 Fc at 30 inches above the ground.
 - 4. Lights must have shields/covers/sleeves to prevent bulb breakage into exposed food.
- J. Storage
 - 1. Dry storage – large enough for all foods and supplies for volume of business.
 - 2. Toxic material/ cleaning supply storage - chemicals must be stored separate to prevent contamination of food, equipment, utensils, linens, paper goods, etc.
 - 3. Cleaning equipment. Must have designated area for all equipment, buckets, etc. Provide racks to store mops, brooms, etc. off the floor.
- K. Food cooking equipment - must be adequate to thoroughly cook all food to the temperatures required by law (supplemental handout on Food Temperatures is available.)
- L. Hot holding equipment - must be able to maintain food at 135° F or higher at all times. Hot holding equipment (including certain "crock pots") cannot be used to cook the food.
- M. Physical construction
 - 1. Food contact surfaces - all must be smooth, durable, easily cleanable, and non-absorbent.
 - 2. In all food storage, food preparation, ware washing areas, and restrooms the floors, walls, and ceilings must also be smooth, durable, easily cleanable, and non-absorbent. Cracks and joints must be filled and smooth. Concrete floors must have sealer or other coating.
 - 3. Dining areas are not required to meet the same requirements as food preparation areas in regards to construction and lighting. However, wait stations or satellite service areas must comply.
- N. Every effort must be taken to prevent flies from entering the establishment through drive-thru windows or doors. Air curtains, if used, must be located to work properly.
- O. Buffet lines and salad bars - Design must prevent contamination of the food by the customer and maintain food temperatures. Customers must use a clean plate each time they get food. All self-service areas must have a visible sign that reminds customers of this and must have a supply of clean plates available.
- P. Posting of permits - The permit to operate issued by the Health District must be visible at all times to customers. Food manager and food worker certificates must be posted and available for review by the Health District. Most recent inspection report available or sign must be posted visible to customers.
- Q. Smoking ordinances – The Health District encourages smoke free establishments county wide. The Cities of Hewitt, Hallsburg, Lacy-Lakeview, Robinson, Waco and Woodway have smoke free ordinances. No smoking signs are required on all entrance doors.
- R. Other requirements - anything not covered above, such as serving raw oysters or sushi, may have special requirements under the Texas Food Establishment Rules. Check with your sanitarian for details, if needed.

III. All new establishments are required to meet these standards.

Regardless of whether the establishment is put in an existing building or built in a totally new location, these requirements apply. There is not a "Grandfather Clause".

Any questions about these details may be asked of any sanitarian at this office.
Please contact us at 254-750-5464.