

# BVPPH Newsletter to our Food Establishments

## **BVPPH – Blackstone Valley Partnership for Public Health**

Representing the Towns of Blackstone, Douglas, Hopedale, Mendon, Millville, Northbridge, Upton and Uxbridge

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Dear Newsletter Recipient,

Welcome to the first Quarterly Newsletter from the Blackstone Valley Partnership for Public Health! We are excited to announce that through a collaborative effort with the Central Mass Regional Planning Commission (CMRPC) the towns of Blackstone, Douglas, Hopedale, Mendon, Millville, Northbridge, Upton and Uxbridge received a grant to supplement existing public health services through June 2025.

We would like to take this opportunity to introduce you to two new health inspectors that you will likely be meeting in person soon, if you haven't already. Danielle Edmands holds a Masters Degree in Public Health and has many years of experience working in the City of Worcester Regional Health Alliance conducting food establishment inspections as well as numerous other public health related services. Mr. Daniel Markman also holds a Masters Degree in Public Health and is a Registered Sanitarian. He will be assisting with inspections but his primary focus will be on education.

We are excited to have them in our region and it is our hope that you will see them as an educational resource and welcome them into your establishment!

## Hand Wash Sinks

One of the most common violations that we see is the improper use of hand-washing sinks. These plumbing fixtures are often used as dump sinks. In accordance with the Federal Food Code (FC 6-301) hand-wash sinks shall be supplied with soap, disposable towels for hand drying, a trash receptacle and proper signage indicating its use as a hand-wash sink for employees. The hand-wash sink shall be readily accessible – do not store, even temporarily, anything that would obstruct the use of the sink.

**When to Wash Your Hands:** Another common violation encountered during inspections is the failure to wash hands prior to donning gloves. FC 2-301 details how and when to wash your hands. You need to wash your hands after touching bare human body parts, after using the toilet room, after caring for or handling service or aquatic animals, after coughing, sneezing, using a tissue, using tobacco, eating or drinking, after handling soiled equipment and during food preparation as often as necessary to remove soil and contamination and to prevent cross-contamination, when switching between working with raw foods and ready-to-eat foods, and before donning gloves to initiate a task that involves working with food.

**How to Wash Your Hands:** To properly clean your hands, food employees shall rinse their hands under clean running warm water, apply soap and rub vigorously for at least 10-15 seconds – pay attention to removing soil underneath the fingernails and creating friction on surfaces of hands, arms, finger tips and areas between the fingers, thoroughly rinse under clean running water and dry using a disposable towel.

# New Food Establishment Inspection Reports

The BVPPH Grant provided an opportunity for our towns to look at updating our food establishment inspectional reporting services. FoodCode Pro, an inspectional software program, will be utilized throughout all eight towns and will be fully implemented over the next few weeks. You will now receive your report via email – no hard copies will be provided. You will still need to comply with the Massachusetts Department of Public Health requirement to make this report available upon request to your customers. Simply print the report and leave a copy at the food establishment.

Once you receive your first report under this new system please reach out with any questions or concerns that you may have.

## ServSafe Classes – Coming Soon

The BVPPH has also provided our towns with the opportunity to offer low-cost Food Manager Certification classes to our food establishments. Our inspectors are currently obtaining their food manager instructor certifications and will be able to offer classes locally and at significantly reduced rates. More on this to come in the near future.

## Power Outages – Reporting Requirements

Did you know that when an imminent health hazard exists due to fire, flood, loss of electrical or water service, a sewage backup, misuse of poisonous materials, or when an apparent foodborne illness outbreak occurs that YOU (the permit holder) are required to discontinue food service operations and notify your local Board of Health of your intent to do so? (See Federal Food Code 8-404.11) There have been numerous instances where power outages have occurred in the Blackstone Valley yet our local Boards of Health did not receive calls from affected food establishments – here is what you need to know:

An **Interruption of Electrical Service** is defined as an extended interruption of electrical service – meaning 2 hours or more. If you experience an interruption of electrical service the PIC (person-in-charge) of your food establishment **MUST** do the following:

1. *Note the date and time of the interruption in electrical service*
2. *Assess the affected operations*
3. *IMMEDIATELY notify your local Board of Health, AND*
4. *Implement the appropriate emergency procedures if approved by your local Board of Health or REMAIN CLOSED*

## Covid

Lastly, we would like to take this opportunity to thank you all for the hard work you have put into making your establishments safe for customers during the Covid-19 pandemic and all that you continue to do to keep your staff and customers safe. It's been a tough year to say the least. Your cooperation has been greatly appreciated. May 2022 bring us all peace and prosperity – Be Safe and Stay Well.

### Blackstone Valley Partnership for Public Health - BVPPH

Blackstone Board of Health (508-883-1500 x129)  
Hopedale Board of Health (508-634-2203 x222)  
Douglas Board of Health (508-476-4000 x252)  
Mendon Board of Health (508-634-2656)

Millville Board of Health (508-883-5041)  
Northbridge Board of Health (508-234-3272)  
Upton Board of Health (508-529-6813)  
Uxbridge Board of Health (508-278-8600 x8)