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Clean-up of Vomiting and Diarrheal Events

When developing a plan that addresses the need for the cleaning and disinfection of a vomitus and/or diarrheal contamination event, a food service operation or retail food establishment should consider:

- The procedures for containment and removal of any discharges, including airborne particulates;
- the procedure for cleaning, sanitizing, and, as necessary, the disinfection of any surfaces that may have become contaminated;
- The procedures for the evaluation and disposal of any food that may have been exposed to discharges; the availability of effective disinfectants, personal protective equipment, and other cleaning and disinfecting equipment and appurtenances intended for response and their proper use;
- Procedures for the disposal and/or cleaning and disinfection of tools and equipment used to clean up vomitus or fecal matter;
- The circumstances under which a food employee is to wear personal protective equipment for cleaning and disinfecting of a contaminated area;
- Notification to food employees on the proper use of personal protective equipment and procedures to follow in containing, cleaning, and disinfecting a contaminated area;
- The segregation of areas that may have been contaminated so as to minimize the unnecessary exposure of employees, customers and others in the facility to the discharges or to surfaces or food that may have become contaminated;
- Minimizing risk of disease transmission through the exclusion and restriction of ill employees as specified in Ohio Administrative Code (OAC) section 3717-1-02.1 (D);
- Minimizing risk of disease transmission through the prompt removal of ill customers and others from areas of food preparation, service and storage; and the conditions under which the plan will be implemented.

When a food employee has been diagnosed, has recent history or exposure to, or is the suspected source of a confirmed disease outbreak of Norovirus, it must be reported to the person in charge. If a food employee has been diagnosed with Norovirus it must also be reported to the regulatory authority.

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Clean-up Procedures for Vomit/Fecal Accidents

The 2016 Ohio Uniform Food Safety Code requires that all food service operations and retail food establishments have written procedures for employees to follow when responding to vomiting and diarrheal events.

Note: Effective cleaning of vomitus and fecal matter in a food service operation or retail food establishment should be handled differently from routine cleaning procedures.

Vomiting and diarrheal accidents should be cleaned up using the following recommended steps:

- Segregate the area.
- Wear disposable gloves during cleaning. To help prevent the spread of disease, it is recommended that a disposable mask and/or cover gown (apron) be worn when cleaning liquid matter.
- Wipe up the matter with towels and dispose into a plastic garbage bag.
- Use the recommended U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) registered disinfectants effective against *Norovirus* (Norwalk-like virus) following label directions or mix a chlorine bleach solution that is stronger than the chlorine solution used for general cleaning [the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention recommends 1000-5000 ppm or 5-25 tablespoons of household bleach (5.25%) per gallon of water]. Note: quaternary ammonia is not an effective sanitizer for *Norovirus*.
- Apply the bleach solution and allow it to remain wet in the affected area for at least 10 minutes. Allow to air dry. Dispose of any remaining sanitizer solution once the accident has been cleaned up.
- Discard gloves, mask, and cover gown (or apron) in a plastic bag.
- Take measures to dispose of and/or clean and disinfect the tools and equipment used to clean up vomit and fecal matter.
- Properly wash hands.
- Discard any food that may have been exposed.
- ***Food contact surfaces that have been disinfected must be washed, rinsed, and sanitized prior to use.***

- Minimize the risk of disease transmission through the prompt removal of ill employees, customers and others from areas of food preparation, service, and storage.

Additional references:

Ohio Uniform Food Safety Code: <http://www.odh.ohio.gov/rules/final/3717-1.aspx>.

Ohio Department of Health Food Safety Program:
<http://www.odh.ohio.gov/odhprograms/eh/foods/food2.aspx>

Ohio Department of Agriculture Division of Food Safety:
<http://www.agri.ohio.gov/divs/FoodSafety/foodsafety.aspx>.

Center for Disease Control (CDC): Preventing Norovirus Infection:
<http://www.cdc.gov/norovirus/preventing-infection.html>

U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) - Registered Hospital Disinfectants Effective against Norovirus (Norwalk-like virus): https://www.epa.gov/sites/production/files/2015-10/documents/list_g_norovirus.pdf.

Clean-up Guidance for Vomit/Fecal Accidents in Food Service Operations

The 2016 Ohio Uniform Food Safety Code requires that all food service operations and retail food establishments have written procedures for employees to follow when responding to vomiting and diarrheal events. Information from this document can help develop written procedures for a facility.

Note: Effective cleaning of vomitus and fecal matter in a food service operation or retail food establishment should be handled differently from routine cleaning procedures.

It is recommended that written procedures for cleaning up vomiting and diarrheal accidents include the following steps:

1. Segregate the area. It is recommended that all surfaces within a twenty-five foot radius of the vomit or diarrhea accident be segregated and properly cleaned and disinfected.
2. Wear disposable gloves during cleaning. To help prevent the spread of disease, it is recommended that a disposable mask and/or cover gown (apron) be worn when cleaning liquid matter.
3. Wipe up the matter with towels and dispose into a plastic garbage bag.
4. Use a U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) registered disinfectant effective against *Norovirus* (Norwalk-like virus) following label directions or mix a chlorine bleach solution that is stronger than the chlorine solution used for general cleaning [CDC recommends 1000-5000 ppm or 2.5-12.5 fluid ounces of household bleach (5.25%) per gallon of water].
5. Apply the disinfectant or bleach solution and allow it to remain wet in the affected area for at least 10 minutes. Allow to air dry. Dispose of any remaining disinfection solution once the accident has been cleaned up.
6. Discard gloves, mask, and cover gown (or apron) in a plastic bag.
7. Take measures to dispose of and/or clean and disinfect the tools and equipment used to clean up vomit and fecal matter.
8. Properly wash hands.
9. Discard any food that may have been exposed.
10. *Food contact surfaces that have been disinfected must be **washed, rinsed, and sanitized prior to use** to remove disinfectant residue and prevent contamination of food.*
11. Discard all garbage bags in the dumpster or waste receptacle. If any of the waste appears to contain blood, refer to the Ohio EPA guidelines for disposal of infectious waste (<http://epa.ohio.gov/portals/34/document/guidance/SmG%20IW%20guidance.pdf>).
12. Minimize the risk of disease transmission through the prompt removal of ill employees, customers and others from areas of food preparation, service, and storage.

Additional Resources:

CDC *Preventing Norovirus Infection*:
<http://www.cdc.gov/norovirus/preventing-infection.html>.

U.S. EPA *Registered Hospital Disinfectants Effective against Norovirus (Norwalk-like virus)*:
https://www.epa.gov/sites/production/files/2017-07/documents/20171207.listg_.pdf

Ohio Uniform Food Safety Code:
<http://www.odh.ohio.gov/rules/final/3717-1.aspx>

Ohio Department of Health Food Safety Program:
<http://www.odh.ohio.gov/odhprograms/eh/foods/food2.aspx>

Ohio Department of Agriculture Division of Food Safety:
<http://www.agri.ohio.gov/divs/FoodSafety/foodsafety.aspx>