**Conference for Food Protection**

**2014 Issue Form**

**Internal Number: 062**

**Issue: 2014 III-014**

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| **Council Recommendation:** | Accepted as  Submitted |  | Accepted as Amended |  | No Action |  |
| **Delegate Action:** | Accepted |  | Rejected |  |  |  |

*All information above the line is for conference use only.*

**Title:**

Amend the water temperature requirement of handwashing sinks

**Issue you would like the Conference to consider:**

Amend paragraph 5-202.12 of the 2013 Food Code to lower the minimum water temperature of handwashing sinks to at least 29.5oC (85oF).

**Public Health Significance:**

The temperature of the water for handwashing is not scientifically associated with a reduction in soil and microflora on hands as documented in multiple studies and review papers.

The CDC has recognized that hot water is not necessary for clean hands and provides the following guidance for hand washing:

**Wet** your hands with clean, running water (warm or cold), turn off the tap, and apply soap

(http://www.cdc.gov/handwashing/when-how-handwashing.html)

Several studies have documented that as the water temperature increased, skin irritation also increased. Skin irritation could lead to cracks, dryness, irritation and a reduced desire to wash hands frequently.

In food establishments, handwashing is an important food safety practice and specific procedures for handwashing are included in the 2013 Food Code in Section 2-301.12. Section 2-301.12(B)(4) mentions washing hands with warm water and does not specify a temperature. In addition, details are provided about using a cleanser, vigorous rubbing, length of time, and creating friction which are all documented in the scientific literature to be important variables in effective handwashing.

Many studies have evaluated the effect of water temperature on the reduction of microflora on hands. Michaels (Michaels et al., 2002, Food Service Technology, 2, p. 139-149) and Todd (Todd et al., 2010, Journal of Food Protection, 73(10) p. 1937-1955) evaluated handwashing and wash water temperature and determined no significant effect of the water temperature. Most studies evaluated temperatures between 29.5°C (85°F) and 54.5°C (130°F) , although some older studies went as low as 4.5°C (40°F).

It is well known that food inspectors and auditors appreciate having a temperature to measure when inspecting handwashing faucets. Given that there are several research studies supporting temperatures of 29.5°C (85°F), we request that the minimum temperature be lowered to 29.5°C (85°F) at this time.

**Recommended Solution: The Conference recommends...:**

That a letter be sent to the FDA requesting that Section 5-202.12 of the 2013 Food Code be amended to the following (new language is underlined; language to be removed is in strikethrough format):

5-202.12 Handwashing Sink, Installation.

(A) A handwashing sink shall be equipped to provide water at a temperature of at least 29.5°C (85°F) ~~38~~~~o~~~~C (100~~~~o~~~~F)~~ through a mixing valve or combination faucet. Pf

**Submitter Information:**

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**Attachments:**

* "Michaels 2002"
* "Todd 2010"

It is the policy of the Conference for Food Protection to not accept Issues that would endorse a brand name or a commercial proprietary process.