**Conference for Food Protection**

**2016 Issue Form**

**Issue: 2016 III-012**

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

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

**Issue History:**

This is a brand new Issue.

**Title:**

Food Service Employees Not Meeting Hand Hygiene Timing Compliance Code

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

Based on the multiple tests conducted by the Center for Disease Control (see attached Journal for Food Protection (JFP)- Factors Related to Food Worker Hand Hygiene Practices PDF) and sanitation departments around the nation, it is necessary for a person to wash their hands for a minimum of 15 - 20 seconds directly under water and with approved soaps to kill 99.9% of disease causing bacteria to reach a true clean (see attached Hand Washing Facts - Joe Hardy PDF). Based on a Michigan State University (see attached Michigan State University Hand Hygiene Compliance Study PDF) study of over 4,000 participants, only 5% of individuals are washing their hands correctly per the regulations where 15 to 20 seconds is required for a total germ free clean.

The average person only washes for 8 seconds. The average professional only washes for 12 seconds. As stated by the Center for Disease Control and local health departments nationwide, there is no direct and efficient substitute for hand sanitation than a simple correctly executed hand wash with soap and water. Poor hand hygiene accounts for up to 60%, which is the majority of food borne illness as outlined by the World Health Organization (see attached World Health Organization Hand Hygiene and Food Borne Illness PDF). This statistic is only of reported food borne illness cases where only a small fraction of all occurrences are actually reported to health authorities leaving this epidemic in reality to be exponentially higher. Poor hand washing also directly accounts for over 20,000 deaths annually in medical establishments in regards to contraction of Hospital Acquired Infections, the 4th leading cause of death in the United States today.

**Public Health Significance:**

The Center for Disease Control has researched, studied, and dictated the proper methodology of hand hygiene is washing your hands for a minimum of 20 seconds to avoid the spread of harmful bacteria from a person's hands. So many cases of food borne illnesses and hospital acquired infections are directly traced back to poor hand hygiene practices being conducted by food service and medical professionals. Staphylococcus aureus is common on people's hair, nose, and skin and because shaking hands, fixing your hair, and wiping your nose are all ways of spreading this bacteria; washing your hands for 20 seconds is the most effective preventive measure to safeguard yourself and others from illnesses. It is the first sign of defense always outlined by health authorities to protect oneself from illness.

Food service employees that do not wash their hands for a minimum of 20 seconds are more prone to causing customer illness. As more and more people are going out to eat and the exponential growth of the hospitality industry, without proper hand washing timing tools, many food service employees can pass harmful bacteria onto others by simply having poor hand hygiene practices. Clostridium difficile is also becoming a huge epidemic in food service as well as medical facilities as it is extremely common among the general public and passed via touch and normal contact. Because it is a spore, it is resistant to hand sanitizers and thus the only way to properly kill and remove this bacteria is by washing one's hands correctly with soap and water to remove the spore bacterium. The requirement for a hand washing timer on every hand washing sink in a retail food service establishment will ensure that proper hand hygiene compliance will increase and food service employees can stop the spread of harmful bacteria in their establishments. This recommendation would ensure that users are meeting the 20 second cleaning procedure as stated in FDA 2013 Food Code 2-301.12 (Cleaning Procedure Section A). Such hand washing timers are readily available in today's market.

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

A letter be sent to the FDA requesting all retail food establishments be required to have a hand washing timer on all hand washing sinks in their establishment(s) and that language be amended to the 2013 FDA Food Code as follow:

1. adding a Paragraph E to Section 5-202.12 (Hand washing Sink, Installation) stating the requirement of a hand washing timer on all hand washing sinks in all retail food establishments
2. adding a Paragraph D to Section 5-205.11 (Using a Hand washing Sink) stating the requirement of a hand washing timer on all hand washing sinks in all retail food establishments.

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**Supporting Attachments:**

* "Michigan State University Hand Hygiene Compliance Study PDF"
* "Hand Washing Facts PDF"
* "World Health Organization Hand Hygiene and Food Borne Illness PDF"
* "JFP - Factors Related to Food Worker Hand Hygiene Practices"

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.