



DENVER
THE MILE HIGH CITY

Department of Environmental Health
Public Health Inspections

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TO: Whom it May Concern

FROM: Danica Lee, Food Program Manager

DATE: 11/06/2012 (Revised 8/7/14)

SUBJECT: Disposal Guidelines for Time and/or Temperature Abuse of Potentially Hazardous Foods*

The Public Health Inspections Division (PHI) is charged with protecting the health of consumers through routine inspections of regulated food facilities, and it is the responsibility of PHI investigators to dispose of any food that is determined to be unsafe using established public health standards. Foods which are stored for extended periods of time without proper temperature control present an increased risk for illness if consumed due to the potential for bacterial growth.

In accordance with standards used by the State health department and the FDA, foods that are found to be above 45 degrees F and to have been so for four (4) hours or more shall be disposed, with the exception of foods that are being properly cooled (§3-603) or time-controlled (§3-605) per the Denver Food Establishment Regulations.

Additionally, any foods which are in the 43-45 F range and have been improperly cooled must be disposed. In determining whether food meets criteria for disposal, investigators use information provided by the facility operator and employees, observations from the inspection, and the investigator's public health and food science training.

If it is determined that food is unsafe due to temperature abuse, PHI investigators are required by the duties of their position to dispose and denature food in the interest of public safety.

*Potentially hazardous foods are foods which support the rapid growth of microorganisms at room temperature.

