



DEC NEWS

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

DEC proposes lowering food service operator fees

September 9, 2004—The Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC) has taken the first step in an innovative food safety program that protects public health and cuts operator costs at the same time. According to Kristin Ryan, director of environmental health, the new food safety program DEC is proposing could lower food service operator fees by approximately \$50.

“Our food safety program was not working,” Ryan stated. “Relying solely on state inspections to assure safe food was not enough to protect public health. The recent vibrio outbreak points out the need for a program that directs restaurant owners’ attention to the high risk foods on their menu. Working with the food service industry, we have designed a program that recognizes it is the responsibility of operators and food handlers to serve safe food, while cutting operator costs at the same time.”

The fee reduction is the initial step in DEC’s larger redesign of Alaska’s food safety program, which will be rolled out in the next few weeks. DEC intends to offer the fee reduction to operators in time for their 2005 annual permit renewals.

For a copy of the proposed fee changes, go to DEC’s Notices of Proposed Regulations section on the State’s Online Public Notice website at <http://notes.state.ak.us/pn/pubnotic.nsf> or email Kimberly_Stryker@dec.state.ak.us.

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