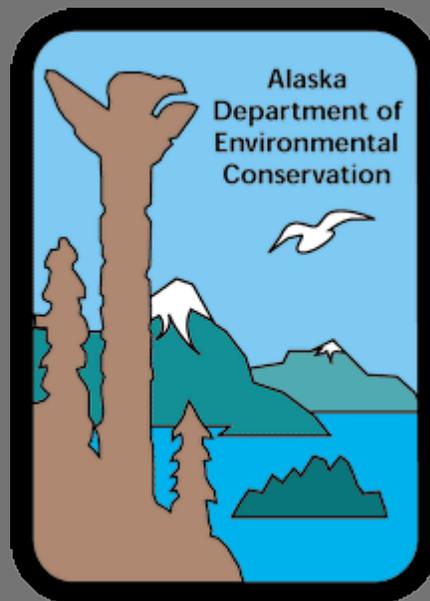


2008

State of Alaska Community Feedback On Food Service Safety and Enforcement

Compiled results of 338 statewide public responses to 12 survey questions conducted by the Alaska Department of Health and Social Services. The questions addressed food safety, food inspections, food enforcement and drinking water as related to restaurants, schools and other facilities used by the public. The survey was conducted via telephone in August and September of 2008 and polled individuals over the age of 18.





Community Feedback on Food Safety

Alaska Department of Environmental Conservation
Division of Environmental Health
Food Safety and Sanitation Program



1. How important do you think restaurant inspections are to keep food safe?

Very important	92%
Somewhat important	5%
Not very important	1%
Not important at all	1%

2. In your opinion, how many times per year do you think restaurants should be inspected?

Once per year	33%
Twice per year	29%
Quarterly	15%
Monthly	8%
Other	15%

3. In your opinion, how many times per year do you think school kitchens should be inspected?

Twice per year	29%
Once per year	23%
Quarterly	17%
Monthly	13%
Other	18%

4. Do you think restaurants should be inspected more than once every two years?

More	88%
Inspected enough	12%

5. If you knew restaurant inspections were frequent (say 2-4 times a year) would you feel safer about eating out?

Yes	87%
No	13%



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6. In your opinion, restaurant inspection frequency should: % are cumulative (not adding to 100%)

Be the same for all restaurants	57%
Be based on the riskiness of the food they are preparing	38%
Be different depending on how many people they serve	23%
Be based on how well the restaurant scored at the last inspection?	15%
Based on other factors	10%
Happen only when the State receives a complaint about the restaurant	9%
Be based on cost to travel to the restaurant	4%

Individual breakdowns of Question #6

- a. In your opinion, restaurant inspection frequency should: Be the same for all restaurants?
yes 55% no 45%
- b. In your opinion, restaurant inspection frequency should: Be different depending on how many people they serve? Yes 15% No 85%
- c. In your opinion, restaurant inspection frequency should: Be based upon the riskiness of the food they are preparing? Yes 35% No 65%
- d. In your opinion, restaurant inspection frequency should: Be based on cost to travel to the restaurant? Yes 3% No 97%
- e. In your opinion, restaurant inspection frequency should: Be based on how well the restaurant scored at the last inspection? Yes 25 % No 75%
- f. In your opinion, restaurant inspection frequency should: Happen only when the State receives a complaint about the restaurant? Yes 8% No 92%
- g. In your opinion, restaurant inspection frequency should: Based on other factors?
Yes 10% No 90%
 - i. In your opinion, restaurant inspection frequency should: Based on other factors? (specified) Individual answers. "No Comment" = 90%.

7. Which of the following do you think should count toward a restaurant's score to show they handled food safely?

The facility is clean . . . bathrooms, counters, kitchen, etc.?	63%
The restaurant has a system in place such as written food safety procedures?	62%
Last five inspections?	57%
Most recent inspection?	56%
Number of employees trained and certified in food safety?	56%
Other factors should count towards the score	5%



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(Question 7, continued – individual breakdowns)

- a. Which of the following do you think should count toward a restaurant's score to show they handled safely? Most recent inspection? Yes 56% No 44%
- b. Which of the following do you think should count toward a restaurant's score to show they handled safely? Last five inspections? Yes 57% No 43%
- c. Which of the following do you think should count toward a restaurant's score to show they handled safely? Number of employees trained in food safety?
Yes 55.5% No 45.5%
- d. Which of the following do you think should count toward a restaurant's score to show they handled safely? The facility is clean . . . bathrooms, counters, kitchen, etc.?
Yes 63% No 37%
- e. Which of the following do you think should count toward a restaurant's score to show they handled safely? The restaurant has a system in place, such as written food safety procedures? Yes 62% No 38%
- f. Which of the following do you think should count toward a restaurant's score to show they handled safely? Other factors should count toward the score?
Yes 4.5% No 95.5%
 - i. Other factors listed individually: 96.4% responded with “No Comment.”

8. How would you like food safety compliance information to be made available?

Posted on the restaurant wall	68%
Available on the internet	60%
Listed in local newspaper	34%
Announced on television	14%
Other	3%

- a. How would you like food safety compliance information to be made available: Posted on the wall? Yes 68% No 32%
- b. How would you like food safety compliance information to be made available: Available on the Internet? Yes 60% No 40%
- c. How would you like food safety compliance information to be made available: Listed in the local paper? Yes 34% No 66%
- d. How would you like food safety compliance information to be made available: Announced on television? Yes 13.5% No 86.5%
- e. How would you like food safety compliance information to be made available: Other?
Yes 3% No 97%
 - i. “Other” ways listed individually – 97% had “No Comment.”



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9. If you knew a restaurant had food handling policies and procedures for their staff to follow, how safe would you feel?

Very Safe	24%
Safe	71%
Not very safe	4%
Not safe at all	1%

10. In your opinion, if a restaurant does not get a "passing inspection," what do you think should happen?

Give them warning and expect it to be corrected at next routine inspection?	13%
Inspect again within a few days	37%
Close the restaurant immediately and allow it to reopen when situation is corrected	34%
Make the restaurant pay a fine	4%
Something else should happen	12%

i. "Something else should happen" - over 90 items listed individually:
88% "No Comment."

11. Currently, drinking water at small businesses such as day cares, gas stations, or offices with private wells is not required to be tested. Do you think the drinking water at these places should be required to meet drinking water safety standards? Yes 92% No 8%

12. Do you consider preventing foodborne illness a public safety issue like fire and crime prevention? Yes 91.5% No 8.5%



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Food Safety Survey Methodology

The Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System (BRFSS) is a cross-sectional telephone survey conducted by the Alaska Department of Health and Social Services with technical and methodological assistance provided by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). Alaska conducts monthly telephone surveys employing random-digit dialing using a standardized questionnaire to determine the distribution of risk behaviors and health practices among adults.

Alaska's BRFSS uses a five region stratified sampling design based; each region contains a combination of boroughs and census areas, and an equal number of interviews are conducted from each region. This design over-samples non-urban areas of Alaska and allows for the collection of meaningful data from rural and minority populations. Alaska residents aged 18 and older are interviewed over the telephone regarding their health practices and day-to-day living habits each month.

In August and September of 2008, a survey on food safety inspections was conducted following the procedures used by the BRFSS. A total of 338 adult respondents were asked 10 questions on the importance of restaurant inspections, their suggested frequency, contributing factors to the score and penalties, and means of distributing of inspection results. Respondents were also asked one question about requiring drinking water testing at small business or offices with private wells and one question on treating the prevention of foodborne illness as a public safety issue like fire and crime prevention. Demographic variables on age, race, employment, income, and employment status were asked to provide socio-economic contexts to the responses. The data have been weighted according to age groups within each region to reflect the estimated 2007 adult population in the state.

The findings in this report are subject to the limitation that the BRFSS and this survey are telephone-based surveys and exclude households without landline telephones or with cellular telephones only.

This version of results represents a condensed overview of the complete report, which is available upon request.