

(608) 270-9950. The Tavern League also offers a one-day (8-hour) course; they can be contacted at 1-800-445-9221.

Blackhawk Technical College offers a 6 week course one day (1-2 hours) per week. Contact their food program administrators for schedules at (608) 757-7730.

### Questions?

Please call the local health department with any questions or concerns you may have. The Rock County Health Department is available Monday through Friday 8:00a.m. to 5:00 p.m. at (608) 757-5441.



This brochure is produced by the Rock County Health Department. The owner, agent, or builder should not rely on this pamphlet as an explanation of all the requirements of the State of Wisconsin code regarding restaurants HFS 196. The future operator should obtain a current copy of the code from the state or local health department or consult the state website at: [www.legis.stat.wi.us/rsb/code/index.html](http://www.legis.stat.wi.us/rsb/code/index.html)

## What you should know before you decide to open a restaurant.



This brochure is designed to help future restaurant operators get the information they need before buying, building, or applying for permits. Before a permit can be issued by the health department many agencies need to be contacted for:

- Plan approval
- Zoning requirements
- Building inspections
- Liquor licenses
- Occupancy and sellers permits
- Fire inspections

Buyers should also be aware of the hidden costs that can accrue from unforeseen problems with existing building structures that have not been updated to current code standards. Problems that can arise are things such as; handicap access to entrances and bathrooms, occupancy vs. number of toilet rooms, wiring problems, equipment not of commercial grade

quality, grease traps not present, sinks outdated or not in proper location, and more.

### What is considered a restaurant?

A restaurant according to Wisconsin Administrative Code DHFS 196.03 is: Any building, room, or place where meals are prepared, served, or sold to transients or the general public, and all places in connection with the building, room or place and includes any public or private school lunchroom for which food service is provided by contract.

### How much does a permit cost?

The permit year for DHFS facilities begins



July 1 and ends June 30 of the following year. When applying for a permit in the spring, it is important to remember that the maximum number of months allowed for a permit to start is 15 months. For example, if you apply for a permit **after April 1, 20xx** your permit will be valid until **June 30, 20xx**. But, if you apply **before April 1, 20xx**, your permit will only be valid until **June 30, 20xx**. The initial pre-inspection will determine whether you are ready to be issued a conditional permit. There is a one time pre-inspection fee charged with each permit issued. The fees change annually, so it is best to call the health department for the current fees. Make sure you can answer these questions before you sign on the dotted line.

### What should I do first?



Before you purchase, rent, or decide to build in an area, it is most important to find out if that area is zoned for the type of business that you would like to do. Get in contact with Local Township or zoning administrators to get the ball rolling. There are some key questions that you should ask yourself before you decide to occupy a facility (or build your own business). Decide for example:

- What types of foods will I be selling?
- Are there any revisions I'd like to make?
- Are there non-code complying issues with the facility that I will need to take care of before opening?
- Can I afford the updates the facility needs to become code compliant?



## Who will I need to contact to get started?

Before you begin construction or begin occupancy of a building for restaurant use, it is a good idea to get in touch with a few key agencies. First, you must determine that the property is zoned properly and that it satisfies all the requirements of the local zoning code such as setbacks, parking and green area standards. This may be accomplished by contacting the Planning Department. A licensed or bonded contractor must do all electrical and plumbing work. The contractor must obtain permits before installation. Sign permits are also required for installation of new signs. A licensed sign erector must install new signs. Buildings containing more than 50,000 cubic feet must have plans drawn and stamped by a licensed architect or engineer for new construction, additions, or alterations. Also, the local fire inspector will need to be consulted for inspection of fire hazards. Generally they look at accessibility of exits, anse systems, fire extinguishers, and more.

The local building inspector should also be contacted for a compliance inspection on building codes. Some of the things they may look at are handicap accessibility and number of seats verses number of toilet rooms available. The health department should be contacted to help you review your plans. This meeting will allow the department to see where all equipment will be when facility is finished. The health department can be a great resource in helping you design the kitchen not only according to code, but also with the best possible workflow for employees. It is recommended that you meet with all departments before construction begins to ensure that you are code compliant. Remember it is much easier and cost effective to fix a problem in the planning phase, then to change it after the project is supposed to be complete.



## What types of equipment will I need?

Most of the equipment that you will need for your facility is required to be of commercial grade quality and NSF approved or approved by the department. Some of the current requirements are:

- Utensil washing sinks shall be of four compartments, non-seam style, and NSF approved, with soiled and clean drainboards for dishes on both ends.
- Refrigeration, stoves, and hoods shall be commercial grade quality. Hoods shall be installed over grease producing equipment, with filters at a 45° angle.
- A food preparation sink shall be installed if there is any cutting or washing of vegetables, thawing of meats or fish, and draining of foods. The sink shall be NSF or Department approved (non-seamed style).
- Handsinks with hot and cold running water, soap, and towels, shall be available in all food preparation/handling areas.
- Dishwashers and utensil washing sinks need soiled and clean drain boards on each end for dishes.
- A utility or mop sink shall be installed for gathering and disposal of mop water.
- Make sure plans include the installation of a grease trap according to local ordinances.

Check with your local health department for more details and a copy of the restaurant code to help get you started.



## Will I need any special licenses or certifications to run the facility?

The State of Wisconsin requires that one person per facility attend a food sanitation course. The course teaches proper food handling techniques, food storage requirements, and sanitation. Once you have completed the course a test will be given. If you pass the test, a copy of your passing score should be sent up to the state offices for official certification. In a few weeks you will receive the certificates in the mail, one for your facility and another for your wallet. Only one person per facility needs to be certified. That person should then be in charge of teaching all food handlers proper techniques in food safety. The course is offered by several agencies at various locations throughout the state. The Wisconsin Restaurant Association can be contacted at