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PERFORMANCE, PEOPLE, PLANET, PRICE...and GREEN.

Canadians' food choices are driven by convenience, health and wellness, pleasure and value. From fast food restaurants to fine dining, the popularity of eating out has created a surge in food services. Eating out more often results in spending more of our income on restaurant meals. According to the Canadian Restaurant and Foodservices Association, the total commercial foodservice industry generated approximately \$60 billion in sales in Canada in 2010. What's more, Canadians make more than 17 million restaurant visits daily.

With more people and families eating out on a daily basis, consumers are increasingly interested in food products that provide reassurances about food safety. When it comes to food safety, consumers most often think of food preparation and handling practices, standards and regulations, and practices that take place during primary production. Food freshness and personal health issues are also an important factor for a number of consumers.

However, according to recent Canadian population studies, Health Canada and the Public Health Agency of Canada estimate that 11-13 million cases of food borne illness occur each year. Research findings by the Canadian Partnership for Consumer Food Safety Education reveal that despite the fact that a majority of adults feel confident that they understand and follow safe food handling procedures, there are still a significant number who do not consistently follow certain safe food handling practices.

Some examples¹:

- Only 50% of consumers reported washing their hands for 20 seconds, before and after handling food. It is important to clean hands and surfaces often to reduce the risk of foodborne illness.
- Only 15% of people consistently use a food thermometer. Using a food thermometer is important – you cannot tell if food has been cooked safely by how it looks.
- Over half of people say they defrost meat and poultry at room temperature "sometimes." This practice can allow bacteria to grow on food.

Simple Steps to Reduce the Risk of Foodborne Illness:

1. Cleaning and Sanitizing

It is essential to develop a regular and comprehensive cleaning and sanitizing maintenance schedule for every piece of equipment and all cleaning operations to prevent dangerous contamination of food from food contact surfaces, utensils and equipment. By taking meticulous steps in following proper cleaning instructions and procedures, this will help remove and destroy micro-organisms from spreading and thus prevent foodborne illnesses in your foodservice establishment.

2. Proper Hand Care Clean

Always wash your hands with soap and hot water before you handle food, while you prepare it, and again when you have finished. Bacteria can spread throughout the kitchen and get on hands, cutting boards, knives and counter tops which can then easily spread to other areas of the restaurant. Frequent cleaning can keep that from happening.

3. Cook

Even for experienced cooks, the improper heating and preparation of food means bacteria can survive. Prepare foods quickly, cook them thoroughly, and serve them immediately. Don't let foods linger at temperatures where bacteria can grow. Use a food thermometer to check if foods are properly cooked.

¹ http://www.canfightbac.org/cpcfse/en/safety/safety_factsheets/bacteria/

4. **Separate**

Cross-contamination is how harmful bacteria spread. Keep raw meat, poultry, and seafood and their juices away from foods that won't be cooked. Always keep foods covered.

5. **Chill**

Bacteria multiply fastest at temperature between 4°C (40°F) and 60°C (140°F), so chilling food properly is one of the most effective ways to reduce the risk of food borne illness.

IMPLEMENTATION

An integral part of food safety is also an efficient cleaning program – in particular **GREEN CLEANING**. In the Restaurants & Institutions 2007 Tastes of America Study, about 86% of consumers surveyed said that it was either important or very important that their restaurants use environmentally friendly cleaning supplies. **Consumers' concern for their health and well being are driving market trends toward more eco-friendly business practices, many restaurants across the country are choosing sustainable green cleaning products for use in their kitchen, dining areas and washrooms.** Sustainable green cleaning products are better for the environment and pose fewer health risks for both employees and patrons. There are many green cleaning products available on the market these days that perform just as well, if not better than, their traditional counterparts. The question to ask is how to choose the right one that meets your needs.

PERFORMANCE

Unfortunately, not all green cleaning products are created equal. When choosing green cleaning products, always carefully read the ingredients listed on the packaging as well as pay close attention to the Material Safety Data Sheet (MSDS). Some products claim to be "green" when they are in fact, far from it. **Look for third party certified cleaning chemicals by reputable organizations such as the *EcoLogo Program*.** What's more, a number of third party certifications, like EcoLogo, perform tests to verify that green products work as well as or better than similar conventional products.

According to Statistics Canada, the foodservice industry employs more than one million Canadians, and almost one-half of them are aged 15 to 24. In fact, nearly one in five young workers is employed in foodservice. It is not surprising then that employee turn-over rate is high; therefore, **it is important to choose a green cleaning program that is easy to use and to train your employees.** Ready-to-use (RTU) products provide accuracy, save time while cleaning effectively, and ensure the pristine appearance of your food service establishment. It is important to follow manufacturers' instructions regarding proper dilution, application and rinsing procedures, as well as dwell time in order to properly sanitize and disinfect while preventing the spread of foodborne illnesses. At the same time, products that are colour coded make it easier for your employees to differentiate which products should be used in which applications.

Another important component of proper cleaning is to avoid cross contamination. A common mistake is to clean multiple areas with the same supplies and/or equipment and to store restroom cleaning supplies together with items used in other areas. Therefore, it is best to store like items together and separate them from those used for other purposes. Keep all cleaning tools and equipment clean and sanitized. Cloths, sponges and mops are sources of concentrated bacteria that can cross-contaminate anything they come into contact with. As a restaurant owner or manager, it is your job to ensure that products are being used properly and efficiently. Easy-to-Use training tools, wall charts and videos will make it easier for you and your employees. Find a sustainable cleaning provider that will take the time to help you train your employees and address any concerns you may have.



PEOPLE

Choosing a green cleaning program that safeguards the health and safety of your employees will help improve productivity, make customers happy, and reduce liability. Studies show that traditional products that contain chlorine bleach, ammonia and other cleaners release greenhouse gases and toxic vapors, many of which are suspected carcinogens. Hazardous chemicals linger for hours and cause a variety of symptoms, both mild and serious, including:

- Headaches
- Fatigue
- Skin and eye irritation
- Chemical burns
- Asthma
- Nausea

The last thing you want is for employees and customers to associate these symptoms with your foodservice establishment. Research shows that improved indoor air quality will increase employee performance and reduce health problems and sick days for workers.

Restaurant employees and customers face the danger of slipping and falling, which can result in injury, a consequence of which is lost work hours, and the negative affect on the restaurant's safety reputation. According to the Canadian Centre for Occupational Health and Safety, in Canada, approximately 60,000 workers are injured each year due to slip and fall accidents. With the average slip, trip or fall costing the employer \$2,000 in direct Workplace Safety Insurance Board (WSIB) costs and a total of \$22,000 in total direct and indirect costs; it is a cost not to be ignored. The Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) recognize that one condition that is hazardous to restaurant employees is cluttered and slippery floors. This is often caused by oil, water or food in the cooking and dishwashing areas².

It is the restaurant owner's responsibility to provide a safe, injury-free environment for both employees and customers. Choosing an effective green cleaning program that removes oil and grease from restaurants' appliances and floors can significantly decrease slips, trips and falls. By taking these initiatives and selecting an effective green cleaning program, it shows that you are taking concrete actions within your business to set an example for other establishments within your community.

PLANET

Traditionally, restaurants would use cleaning products that are often more dangerous than the germs they are killing. These products contain chlorine (in anti-bacterial sprays, drain and toilet bowl cleaners), ammonia (in window and floor cleaners), caustic soda (in oven cleaners) and volatile organic compounds. When these chemicals are flushed, they often wind up down the drain and later enter rivers, lakes and other bodies of water³.

- Indoor air pollution is 2-5 times higher than outdoor pollution, on average, according to the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA)
- At least 1/3 of cleaning products contain chemicals that are known to cause significant damage to humans or the environment
- According to the World Health Organization (WHO), about 80% of cancers are related to environmental factors like toxins

Remember to choose a green cleaning program where raw materials are biodegradable and meet the highest environmental standards for storage, transportation and disposal. More specifically, materials used should be safe for our water systems and aquatic life. Green cleaning products contain harmless, biodegradable solvents like natural citric and fatty acids. These products are

² <http://www.foodservicewarehouse.com/education/health-safety/slip-and-fall-hazards.aspx>

³ <http://www.foodservicewarehouse.com/education/going-green/green-up-clean-up.aspx>



SCAN FOR ADDITIONAL
INFORMATION



About Avmor Ltd.: Headquartered in Laval, Quebec, Avmor is Canada's leading manufacturer of professional cleaning solutions aimed at the Jan/San and Foodservice markets. Avmor holds a GMP (Good Manufacturing Practices) license, which is a prerequisite to be able to manufacture hand soaps that include antiseptic claims and a DIN (Drug Identification number) or NPN (Natural Product Number) provided by Health Canada. Avmor offers a full range of hand care products. Avmor's complete line of cleaning products include Cleaners/Degreasers, Floor Care, Washroom Care, Food Service Care, Hand Care, Disinfectants and others. Some of Avmor's signature brands are Av-mixx Dilution Control System, Biomor Biological Cleaning Solutions, Quick Stuff Food Service Cleaning System, Synergy Floor Care and EcoPure, its environmentally responsible sanitation program which features over 40 certified EcoLogo products. For over 60 years, Avmor has remained at the industry forefront, defining product performance standards and striving for the safest and most cost-effective cleaning systems for professional use. Avmor Ltd. is a privately held company.

safe to use, clean surfaces, dishes and other appliances around the kitchen and pose no threat to humans, animals or plant life. Today, the focus is on the environment. People everywhere are concerned about the future of our planet and are discovering ways to reduce their carbon footprint.

PRICE

It is a common misconception that green cleaning products cost more and do not work as well as traditional chemicals. **In fact, green products may cost less,** since you can use a dilution system that dispenses the exact amount of liquid required to do the job. By looking for products with dilution control, you are not only maximizing their effectiveness and preventing waste and residues, but you are substantially reducing ready-to-use (RTU) costs while making cleaning easier and less dangerous for your employees.

Green cleaning goes beyond avoiding hazardous chemicals. In order to achieve a truly green clean, consider other areas of your restaurant business where you can go green. Here are a few cost efficient suggestions:

- **Avoid single-use items.** Cleaning with recycled cloth or reusable sponges works just as well. If you need paper towels, buy products made from recycled paper.
- **Use microfiber.** Microfiber mops and rags require less water and chemicals, clean better and are reusable. In fact, microfiber is designed to pick up dust and bacteria without any water or chemicals.
- **Conserve water and energy.** For the current restaurant owner, upgrading to energy-efficient equipment can cut your energy usage in half, and local governments and utility companies across Canada are offering substantial rebates for consumers who purchase Energy Star rated equipment. Foodservice establishments use a lot of water each day for both cooking and cleaning purposes. It is quite easy to conserve water in a restaurant. Low-flow spray valves can be purchased from restaurant supply stores which can get the job done well, but at the same time trimming hundreds of dollars from an establishment's water costs. Energy Star dishwashers can be installed, as can ice machines and steamers, which will save on money by conserving water and reducing water bills.

BENEFITS OF CLEAN AND GREEN

A restaurant's reputation and, ultimately, bottom line depends on cleanliness. A customer's single bad experience can ruin and destroy a restaurant's solid reputation that was built up over the years. Taking these steps towards a green clean restaurant will help extend your restaurant's reputation and brand. An efficient green cleaning program covers all areas of cleaning from maintenance and recycling to training. Making a conscious decision to choose healthier the key to going green. In the end, making the change from the use of standard, harsh industrial cleaners to more environmentally sound, user-friendly cleaners is an action that not only benefits the natural environment, but also employee and customer's health.

