



STATE OF MICHIGAN  
DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE  
AND RURAL DEVELOPMENT

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GOVERNOR

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**DATE:** July 20, 2012

**TO:** All Local Health Departments (LHDs)  
Attn: Medical Director / Health Officer / Director of Environmental Health  
Michigan Department of Agriculture and Rural Development  
Attn: Food and Dairy Division Managers

**FROM:** Sandra Walker, Manager, Food Service Program *Sandra Walker*  
Food and Dairy Division

**SUBJECT:** Storage of In-use Utensils

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The Michigan Department of Agriculture and Rural Development, Food Service Program, was recently requested by the MALEHA Food Committee to clarify the proper storage of in-use utensils. There are some food service corporations which have created policies for storing in-use utensils in water at 41°F or below. The misconception exists that in-use utensils can be stored in water at a temperature of 41°F or below or in a container of sanitizing solution. Neither of these practices is in compliance with the Food Code.

The Food Code, §3-304.12 allows in-use utensils to be stored in one of the following methods:

- In the food with the handles above the top of the food and the container,
- On a clean portion of the food preparation table or cooking equipment as long as the utensils are cleaned and sanitized every 4 hours (§4-602.11(C)),
- In running water of sufficient velocity to flush particulates to drain, or
- In a container of water that is maintained at 135°F or above and the utensil and container is cleaned at a frequency of at least every 24 hours or as necessary to preclude accumulation of soil residues as directed in §4-602.11(D)(7).

The local health departments, under §8-103.10, may grant a variance of a food code section as long as a health hazard or nuisance will not result from the variance. Any variance shall be revoked if approved procedures are not being followed by the operator.

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