

**DON'T FORGET!**

When you apply for a Food Dealer License, get your inspector involved well before your target opening date.

\*\*\*\*\*

“Do-it-your-selves” and contractors alike can avoid errors, disappointments and delays by consulting health department staff early!

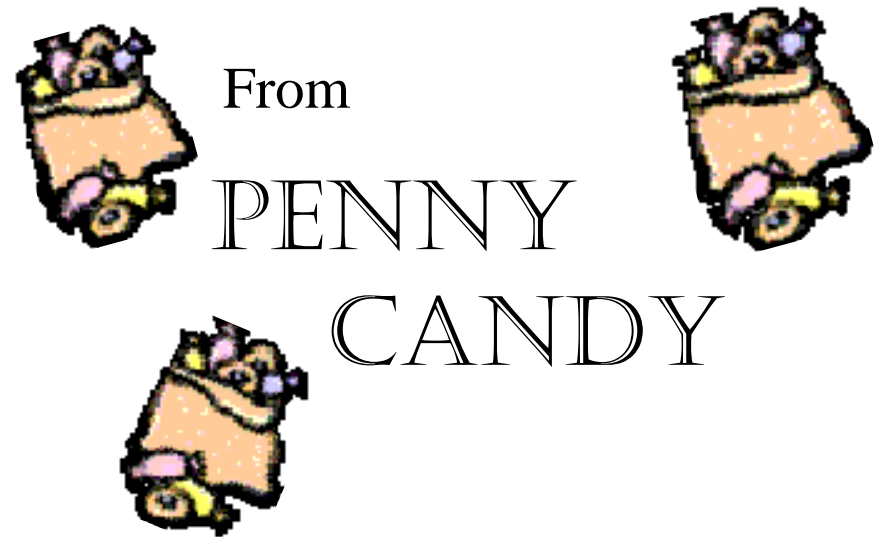
**For more information regarding:**

- *Food Safety*
- *Licensing*
- *Food Safety Courses*
- *Restaurant or Retail Food Regulations*

*Please contact the Brown County Health Department  
Environmental Division  
Phone: (920)448-6400  
Fax: (920)448-6449  
[www.co.brown.wi.us/health](http://www.co.brown.wi.us/health)*



Revised May, 2006



From

PENNY

CANDY

to

*Five Star  
Meals*

\* \* \* \*

A Guide to Selling Food in Brown County

### Floors, Walls and Ceilings

A food service facility must be easy to clean. Finishes must stand up to the constant application of water and cleaning solutions. Dark colors that conceal dirt and grease must be avoided. Ridges, textures, seams, cracks and crevices aren't allowed because they're harder to clean and retain moisture and food debris. These create conditions that make sanitation and pest control difficult.

Older facilities may have areas that don't meet these standards. The health department will evaluate these each time there is a change of operator or a change of use, menu or volume at an existing operation.

Don't guess when making changes or repairs! Your inspector knows which materials meet Wisconsin Food Code standards and which will perform well for your application. Workmanship is important too! If you, or a contractor, install or apply the right materials with poor workmanship, the work cannot be accepted.

### Refrigeration and Other Equipment

Non-commercial refrigerators are not allowed in any licensed facility. Do not buy a refrigerator that isn't listed by an ANSI accredited agency (NSF) for commercial use. Before buying a listed unit, check with your health department inspector to make sure it is designed for your application. A cooler accepted for self-service in a retail grocery may not be accepted in a restaurant kitchen. Grandfathered coolers will be re-evaluated any time an inspector visits. Non-commercial freezers are accepted only under specific circumstances. Your inspector will make that decision.

An NSF, ETL Sanitation or UL Sanitation listing is your best assurance that equipment will be acceptable. We don't recommend purchasing non-listed equipment. **Check with an inspector first!**



A FEW WORDS ABOUT...

## FACILITIES AND EQUIPMENT

### Ventilation

Heat and grease producing equipment must be properly ventilated. If exhaust equipment (including replacement air) isn't properly installed, clean and in good condition, fire safety, sanitation, and employee health and comfort will be compromised. Every installation and modification of exhaust ventilation equipment in a food establishment must be reviewed and approved by the health department **before** work is started.

Existing systems will be evaluated at:

- each licensing inspection
- when menus or equipment are altered
- when problems are observed during inspections

Kitchen ventilation isn't a field for the untrained handyperson. Always use professionals for design, installation and servicing of ventilation equipment.

### Sinks

Sink requirements vary. A store with nothing but prepackaged items only needs to have a restroom sink for hand washing; and a mop sink. Facilities like this cannot be licensed for any other type of food service.

Restaurants and stores that process or handle unpackaged food must have sinks (and/or mechanical dish washing equipment) for utensil washing, hand washing and disposal of mop water. Restaurants and stores where food is processed may also need food preparation sinks.

Specific standards and requirements for each type of sink are found in the Wisconsin Food Code. You should **never** purchase or install a sink or dish machine until you've made sure it meets the requirements for your application. All installations must be done in compliance with Wisconsin Plumbing Codes, so make sure your plumber is licensed and has obtained the necessary permits.



The food business is a regulated business. The Brown County Health Department licenses all retail food businesses in Brown County not within the city limits of De Pere. Since beverages are food too, the health department inspects Class B taverns licensed by the various city/town clerks offices and issues food dealer licenses at taverns that serve food. The requirements for retail food operations are found in the Wisconsin Food Code, which is state law.

There is no "one size fits all" food dealer license. Businesses that sell only packaged goods don't need the same type of license as businesses where unpackaged food is handled and prepared (like grocery stores with deli counters or restaurants). We have prepared this guide to help you understand the different types of licenses and equipment standards, and to walk you through the application process.



Web link to the Wisconsin Food Code:

[http://datcp.state.wi.us/fs/regulation/food/food\\_code.html](http://datcp.state.wi.us/fs/regulation/food/food_code.html)

## Helpful Hints

Did you know that...

- \* the condition of your building can affect how much or little work it will need to meet code requirements for a food operation?

HINT: **Always** discuss any work to be done with your inspector **BEFORE** completing the work to be certain it will be up to code.

- \* when you have a food dealer license, you (or your corporation) are responsible for code compliance – from operations to maintenance and repairs?

HINT: If you operate your business in a building you don't own, make sure you and your landlord discuss exactly who will be responsible for what. The health department will issue orders **to you**, not your landlord.

- \* if you cook or process food, within 90 days of opening, you must have a manager who holds a Certified Professional Food Manager certificate from the Wisconsin Department of Health and Family Services?

HINT: Ask your inspector for a list of schools and organizations that offer accredited food sanitation classes.

Don't assume that taking over an existing restaurant or tavern will simply be a matter of paperwork. In many cases it is, but some things may need to be changed or upgraded to meet current codes. Current operators, landlords or others involved in the transactions don't have final say on licensing. The Health Department does – so do your homework **before** making commitments!

### **REMEMBER:**

All questions should be directed to:  
Brown County Health Department  
(920)448-6400

## -APPLYING FOR A LICENSE- Frequently Asked Questions

*I'm taking over an existing business...*

Contact an inspector. The inspector will do a pre-inspection at your business to see if any repairs or changes need to be made **before** you open. Grandfathered equipment will be re-evaluated. The inspector will also review your menu (for restaurants and stores that prepare food) and inform you about current code requirements.

*I'm taking over an existing business*

*But I'm making changes...*

Contact an inspector. Your inspector will talk to you about your plans. Changes in menu, hours or volume of food preparation may require equipment changes. Grandfathered equipment will be re-evaluated. If you plan to remodel, you should submit plans for the health department to review **before** you start.

*I'm starting from scratch – new construction...*

Contact an inspector. **Before** construction, you should submit plans to the health department for review. A site evaluation by a health inspector to assess what a location needs to meet Wisconsin Food Code standards for the type of food service you plan to operate may be necessary. Things that will be considered are

- opening at a location that has not been a food business before
- opening a food business that has been closed for five or more years
- planning to process food, or prepare meals at a location that was previously licensed for prepackaged foods only

### **REMEMBER!**

It is not legal to operate merely because you have applied and/or paid for a license. You **cannot** open your business until the inspector has visited and released your license!