



# Environmental Health



April 8, 2016

## PLACARDING FOOD FACILITIES

The big news from Environmental Health this year is that placarding will begin April 15, 2016. Inspectors will post the placard when they conduct a routine inspection at a food facility after April 15. In approximately one year, we anticipate all food facilities will have received a placard.

**The rest of this newsletter provides more information about the placarding.**

More information about placarding, including videos about the placarding program and How to Get a Green, can be found by visiting the website: [cchealth.org/placard](http://cchealth.org/placard).

Placards document any food safety concerns found by an Environmental Health inspector at the time of the last inspection (routine or re-placarding inspection), and the inspection date.

## Keep the Placard Safe and Easily Visible!

### What do the colors of the signs mean?

Any major problems found during an inspection must be corrected immediately, in the presence of the inspector, or the business must close until they are fixed.

#### Green means Pass

A green placard means that no more than one major violation was observed during the facility's most recent inspection (routine or re-placarding inspection).

#### **Yellow** means Conditional Pass

A yellow placard means that two or more major violations were observed during the facility's most recent inspection (routine or re-placarding inspection).

#### **Red** means Closed

A red placard means the facility is closed because of food safety violations that poses an imminent health hazard.

#### PLACARD PENDING

This placard means a facility is new or has undergone a change of ownership and has not yet been inspected. A Placard Pending will also be posted when a closed facility reopens after correcting an imminent health hazard.



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**What is a major violation?**

Major violations are found based on criteria found by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention to be associated with food-borne illness. You can find them in the first 22 items on Contra Costa's [routine inspection form](#), excluding No. 4, 6, 12 and 18.

Major violations are grouped under the following criteria (Critical Risk Factors for Food-borne illness):

- Employee health and hygiene
- Contamination by hands
- Time and temperature relationship
- Protect food from contamination
- Food from an approved source

**What happens if a food facility gets a yellow placard during a routine inspection?**

The inspector will provide on-site food safety education, and the inspector will recommend that the food staff watch the "How to Get a Green" video available on our website and on CD. The video is available in several languages.

Any facility that receives a Conditional Pass (yellow) placard during a routine inspection will receive a re-placarding inspection within 10 business days. The re-placard inspection focuses on the Critical Risk Factors. One re-placard inspection or re-inspection is included in the yearly permit fee, any additional re-placard inspections or re-inspections will be chargeable at the current hourly rate.

**What happens if the facility gets a yellow placard during a re-placard inspection?**

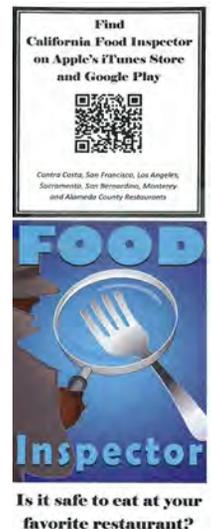
If a Conditional Pass (yellow) placard is issued at the re-placarding inspection, that placard will remain until the next scheduled routine inspection.

**What happens if a facility is consistently found to have two or more major violations (ie not practicing all safe food handling practices)?**

If a facility receives two consecutive Conditional Pass (yellow) placards, the permit holder must schedule and pay for a food safety refresher course for all the food employees at the establishment. Refresher courses will be offered by Environmental Health at their offices or may be arranged to occur at the facility.

If a facility receives three consecutive Conditional Pass (yellow) placards, a compliance conference with an Environmental Health supervisor is required to review violations, documentation of corrections, and the facility's policies to mitigate food safety issues.

If a facility receives four consecutive Conditional Pass (yellow) placards, an administrative hearing to consider suspension or revocation of an operator's permit will be scheduled. Fees apply.



**Only Environmental Health inspectors may legally post, remove or relocate the yellow, green or red placards.**

Tampering, covering or **hiding** the placard will result in fines and fees, and may result in suspension or revocation of an operator's permit.

The placard will usually be posted near the main entrance, facing outward. In some instances, the placard may be placed near the point of sale.

Maintaining the placard is the permit holder's responsibility. If the placard is missing or altered, call 925-692-2500 within 24 hours to request a new one.