

Fixed Food Establishment Guidelines

New, Renovated or Change of Owner/Occupancy Requirements

These guidelines are provided to answer some of the most frequently asked questions regarding permit requirements for new or remodeled food establishments. These Guidelines are NOT all inclusive. The business owner is encouraged to read and understand the Texas Food Establishment Guidelines (State Law governing food establishments) when opening a food establishment facility. Please contact the Midlothian Code Enforcement/ Health Department for further information at 972-775-7625.

SECTION I: PLANS AND PERMIT APPLICATIONS.

Before construction and remodeling of a fixed facility begins, you must apply for a building permit and submit three complete sets of plans (to scale) to the Building Inspections Department. Plans must show floor plan, fixtures and equipment layout, room finish schedule, location of floor and hub drains, etc. The plans will be distributed to the Building Official, Fire Marshal and the Code/Health Department for review and comments. A new application must be completed with the Building Inspections Department and Environmental Health Department for an existing permitted facility if there is a change of ownership or prior to remodeling. All equipment and facilities in an existing permitted food establishment must meet the minimum requirements of the City of Midlothian and the Texas Food Establishment Rules, if there is a change of ownership, the nature of the operation changes or the establishment is extensively remodeled.

SECTION II: CONSTRUCTION OF BUILDING

FLOORS. In food/beverage preparation areas, storage areas, utensil-washing areas, all walk-in refrigeration units, and restrooms, floors must be constructed of smooth durable material that is cleanable and impervious to liquids. Examples include terrazo, ceramic or quarry tile. Surfaces shall be maintained in good repair, and graded to trapped floor drains. Sealed concrete or wood is not permitted for floor construction in these areas.

WALLS. In food/beverage handling and preparation areas, utensil washing areas and restrooms, sheetrock or similar type walls are to be covered with rigid, high density, non-absorbent, smooth light in color, easily cleanable material such as fiberglass reinforced plastic panels, ceramic or quarry tile, stainless steel, etc. Minimum height is eight feet. Walls in dry storage areas only may be painted with oil-based enamel or epoxy paint. Areas constructed of smooth brick, concrete, block, or similar masonry may be painted as stated above.

CEILINGS. Construct the ceiling of a smooth, non-absorbent and easily cleanable material or t-type lay-in acoustical tiles. Ceiling must be light in color in the kitchen, dish wash areas, over bar, in wait stations or storerooms.

FLOOR DRAINS. A minimum of three-inch diameter floor drain is required in the food preparation areas, kitchen, bar and all restrooms.

SECTION III. MINIMUM SINK REQUIREMENTS.

HAND WASH SINK. Must be located in food preparation and utensil washing areas. There shall be access to a hand sink in the dishwashing area and in the food prep area without going through a door and no greater than 25' between sinks. Hand sinks are for hand wash ONLY.

UTILITY SINK. A curbed area with a trapped floor drain or stainless steel utility sink on bullet legs is required in all food establishments.

SINKS FOR SANITIZING FOOD EQUIPMENT. A Three (3) Compartment Sink on bullet legs with drain board or a commercial dishwasher meeting National Sanitation Foundation Standards is required.

ADDITIONAL FOOD EQUIPMENT WASHING FACILITIES.

Scrap sinks, pre-rinse or additional pot washing sinks may be required. All spray hoses shall be properly installed with approved vacuum breakers.

SECTION IV. EQUIPMENT AND INSTALLATION.

EQUIPMENT. Equipment must meet or exceed National Sanitation Foundation design standards. Adequate space should be provided between walls and fixtures or equipment to permit access for cleaning. No food preparation or storage equipment is allowed to be installed under open stairwells or exposed sewer lines.

EQUIPMENT AND UTENSILS. Equipment and utensils must be designed and fabricated for durability under conditions of normal use and must be resistant to denting, buckling, pitting and chipping.

AUXILIARY EQUIPMENT. Such as water heater, remote refrigerators, compressor, or air conditioner, may not be located in food preparation or utensil washing areas.

GREASE TRAPS. Grease Trap should be located outside the facility, and serving all sinks, dishwashers, and floor drains in food preparation areas.

MOP SINKS. Mop sinks are required by TFER.

VENTED HOODS. Must have removable filters and located over all cooking surfaces.

Domestic refrigerators, dishwashers, freezers or ranges are not approved for use in commercial food establishments.

FOOD CONTACT SURFACES. Must be impervious to liquids, **must not be** painted, **must be** of non-corrosive materials and be accessible for cleaning and inspection.

IMPORTANT NOTICE:

If you are planning on buying a pre-existing food establishment it is best to contact the Health/ Code Enforcement Department before purchase. There may be wall and floor finishes and equipment that do not meet the current health codes and will have to be changed in order to comply. We want you to be successful. By checking with the city prior to construction, you will know beforehand what will be required before you are ready to open to the public.

Fiberglass reinforced panels (FRP) and ceramic tiles are approved wall finishes. Height requirement in the kitchen is eight feet and four feet in the restrooms. Painted gypsum board, corrugated metal, unsealed brick is not an approved wall finish for kitchen areas.

Commercial grade equipment is required. Domestic equipment is prohibited. A hand wash sink is required every 25 linear feet in the kitchen, ware wash and in restrooms. A utility sink and three-compartment sink are also required. A plan review will be required for an extensive remodel. Prior knowledge of what will be required is an asset to a new restaurant owner.