



AVOID A HEALTH INSPECTION HEADLINE:
YOUR PEST MANAGEMENT GUIDE TO HEALTH SCORE SUCCESS



IF YOU FOLLOW THE LOCAL NEWS, INEVITABLY YOU HAVE SEEN A HEADLINE LIKE THIS:

LOCAL RESTAURANT CLOSED DUE TO FAILED HEALTH INSPECTION

Even if the restaurant will reopen after improvements are made, the damage is done. Health inspections don't always result in a shutdown, but low scores are now more visible than ever. Not only do you have to post your score in a place visible to patrons, but now many municipal health departments post inspection scores online. That means your latest inspection score (and the specifics of any deductions) are just a web search away. Given the high stakes, restaurateurs must prepare for unannounced health inspections.

HOW PESTS FACTOR INTO HEALTH INSPECTIONS

The main purpose of a health inspection is food safety. Since rodents, flies, cockroaches and other pests can contaminate food and food preparation surfaces, any evidence of vermin – and conducive conditions that might lead to pest activity – can result in point deductions. If an active infestation is discovered, the health inspector can shut down the establishment immediately and keep it closed until the problem is resolved. A damaged reputation and lost revenue are obviously the last thing you want.



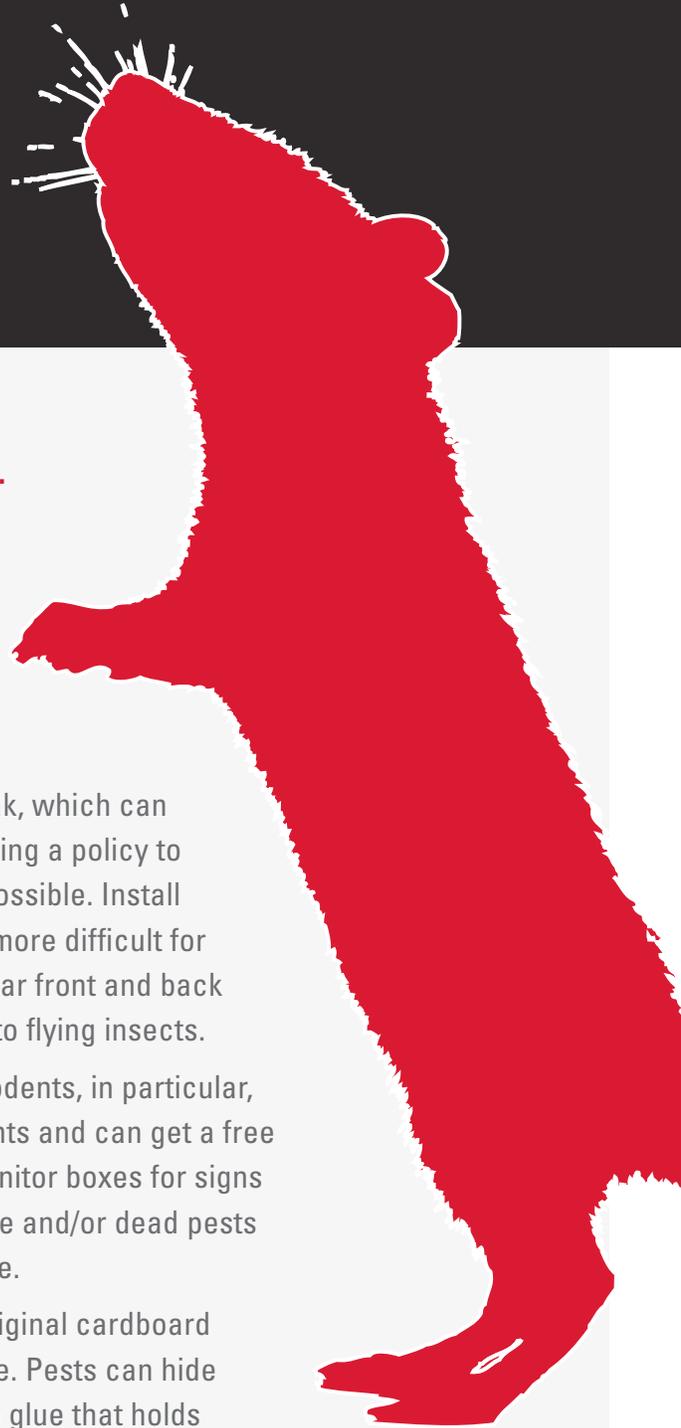
COMMON PEST HOT SPOTS

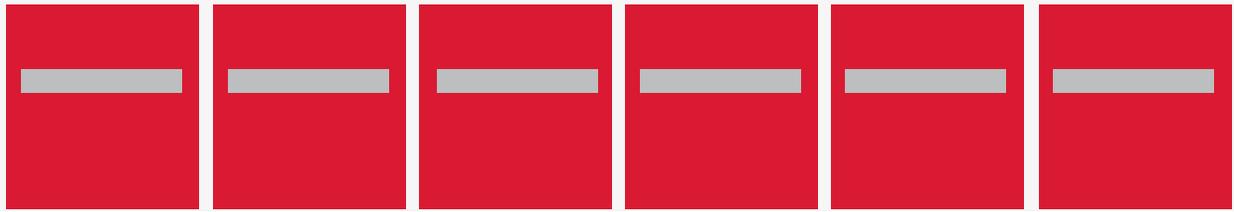
To help you prepare for your next health inspection, consider performing your own inspections on a regular basis, focusing on four common pest “hot spots.”

HOT SPOT #1: RECEIVING AREAS

Pests look for easy ways to access your restaurant. Take these steps to help pest-proof your restaurant from the outside in.

- **Prevent entry.** Doors are often left open for long periods of time because of incoming food and supply shipments. Similarly, these doors may be propped open when employees go outside for a break, which can cause problems, especially at night. Consider enforcing a policy to promote keeping outside doors closed as much as possible. Install air curtains or vinyl strips on these doors to make it more difficult for pests to enter, and also replace fluorescent lights near front and back entrances with LED lights, which are less attractive to flying insects.
- **Inspect supplies before storing.** Cockroaches and rodents, in particular, are known as “hitchhiking” pests in food environments and can get a free ride into your restaurant on incoming shipments. Monitor boxes for signs of these pests such as gnaw marks, droppings, or live and/or dead pests themselves. Use black lights to help spot rodent urine.
- **Toss the cardboard.** Remove shipments from their original cardboard boxes and discard the cardboard as soon as possible. Pests can hide inside boxes, and cockroaches can even feed on the glue that holds boxes together.





HOT SPOT #2: STORAGE AREAS

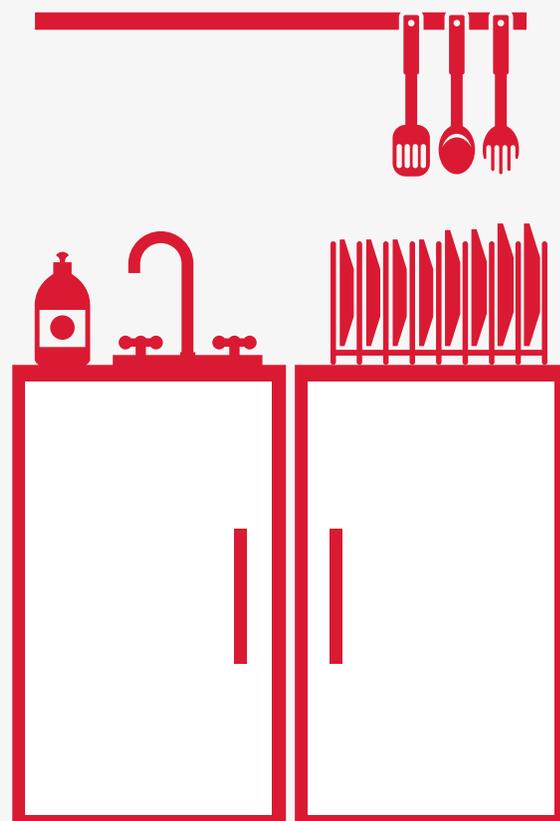
Stocked with food, hidden from humans, dark and sometimes damp, storage areas can be the perfect spot for pests to hide. Use these tips to make sure storage spaces remain a place for supplies, not a home for pests.

- **Shelve with a purpose.** Place food supplies on open-backed shelving to eliminate pest hiding spots. Keep shelves at least 6 inches off the floor and 18 inches from the wall so you can check beneath and behind racks regularly to confirm there is no pest activity.
- **Make routine sweeps.** Regularly review inventory to make sure it's organized and in date. Immediately clean up spills that occur and regularly sweep to ensure any food particles that can attract pests are eliminated.
- **Seal your stock.** Transfer dry goods to containers where you can keep them tightly sealed in airtight and undamaged cartons. This can help prevent odours from escaping and attracting pests, too.
- **When in doubt, rotate.** All inventory should be labeled and dated. Rotate goods on a first in, first out (FIFO) basis so older products are always at the front of the storage area and no items are left in storage too long.

HOT SPOT #3: KITCHENS

The health inspector will be just as interested as a hungry patron in what's cooking in your kitchen. Make sure your kitchen is clean and deters pests from accessing the food, water, shelter and optimal temperatures they need to survive.

- **Restrict water sources.** Pests only need a small amount of water to survive, so a leaking faucet, dishwasher or ice machine can pose big risks. Work with a plumber or appliance professional to quickly repair any leaks. Also equip all food preparation sinks, dishwashers and ice machines with indirect drains to prevent sewage backups.
- **Get rid of your garbage.** Your garbage is a pest's buffet, so garbage containers inside should be covered and properly lined. Trash should be taken out whenever it is full, and without passing through food preparation areas on its way outside. Ensure your employees follow proper hand-washing procedures after handling garbage. Dumpsters and any other outdoor trash containers should have tight-fitting lids, be cleaned and sanitized regularly, and should be located as far as possible from your building.
- **Wipe down food contact surfaces.** Clean the kitchen thoroughly between shifts and at the end of each day. Be sure to sweep or mop under appliances and counters. Also make sure you take apart motor housing equipment like mixers and slicers regularly for cleaning. This often-overlooked task can cause point deductions.
- **Use environmentally responsible products.** Consider using an organic cleaner in and around sink and floor drains and on the kitchen floor to eliminate hard-to-remove grime. A good cleaner will break down food particles that attract pests and fully sanitize equipment.



HOT SPOT #4: DINING AND BAR AREAS

Ongoing sanitation is the best way to keep dining areas open for customers and not pests.

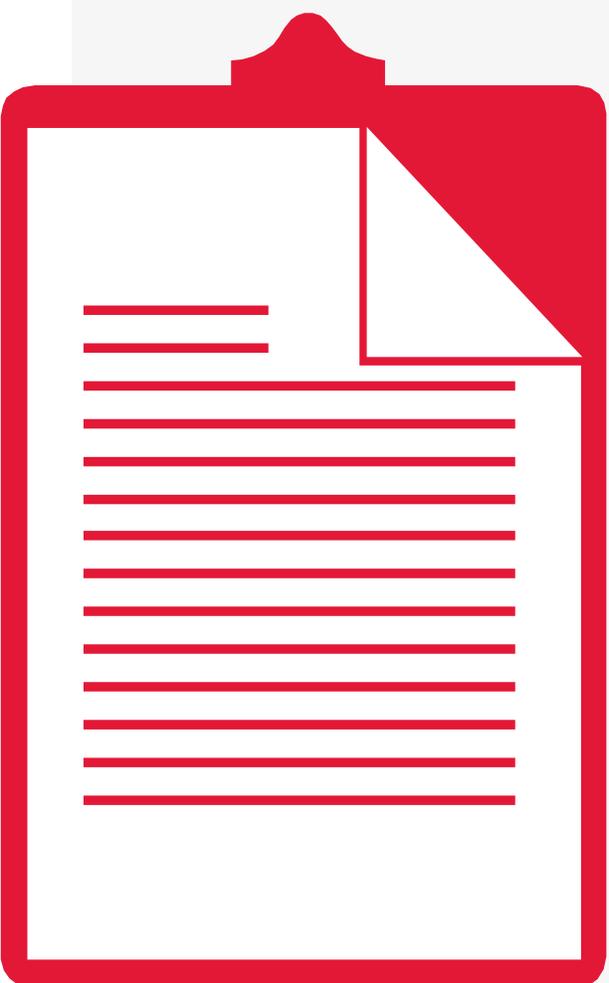
- **Wipe out pest reservations.** Wipe down tables and chairs and then sweep and mop under them between customer seatings. Cracks and crevices around booths, tables and chairs can all be harbourage spots, so pay special attention to those areas. Any carpeted areas should be vacuumed regularly. Thoroughly clean all dining areas at the end of each day.
- **Keep the bar area clean and organized.** Sticky residues from spilled drinks and crumbs from bar food can serve as late night snacks for pests. Be sure to clean tabletops, counters and floors after each guest. At the end of the night, remove all food items from the bar, including garnishes, and store them in airtight containers. Dispose of all empty bottles and cardboard boxes. Fruit flies can lay eggs in bottles, while cockroaches can use the corrugated cardboard as shelter and even eat the glue that holds boxes together. Finally, keep ice dispensers, refrigerators and soda fountains in working order to prevent leaks or excess condensation.
- **Pay attention to the patio.** Hose down outdoor dining areas daily to remove crumbs and spills that might attract pests. But be careful not to leave any standing water that also might draw pests. You'll also want to check that there isn't any food debris stuck in the drain or in nearby mulch after hosing down the area.



DOCUMENTATION

If monitoring hot spots is the main course, then documentation is the dessert. Yes, it's sweet to get to this point without any deductions, but don't celebrate too soon. That's because a failure in documentation can also result in point deductions. You can receive a violation for incorrect forms, insufficient information or failure to comply with applicable documentation laws.

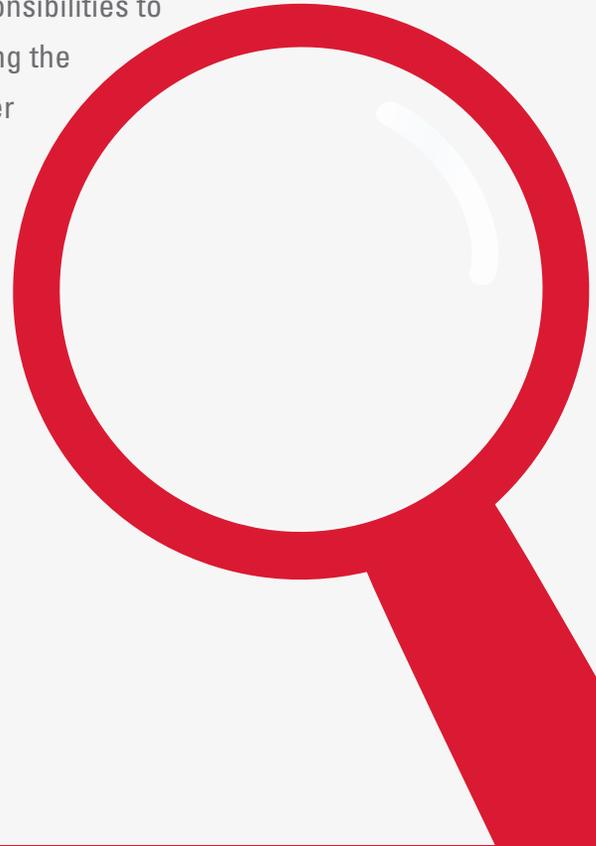
And documentation isn't just about being compliant with the health department – proper documentation will also allow you to identify pest trends shown in your long-term data and monitor the success of your pest management program.



- **Maintain service reports.** Up-to-date service reports show health inspectors that pest management is a year-round commitment. Work closely with your pest management professional during each visit, discuss their recommendations and make improvements as necessary. You also should file all documents – including annual permits, hand-washing policy, food safety staff training and pest management documentation – in a central location for quick reference. Make sure all staff members know where these documents are stored.
- **Write down corrective and preventive actions.** If you have a pest problem, always file a corrective action report to show what steps were taken to either treat a pest problem or fix issues contributing to pest problems and help prevent future occurrences.
- **Record chemical treatments.** All chemical applications should be thoroughly documented, including the trade name of the material used; the date, time and method of application; frequency of service; and certification forms for the applicator.

PREPAREDNESS REQUIRES PRACTICE

The best way to prepare for an inspection is to practice. Ask your pest management professional to perform a mock inspection of your restaurant and assess any potential food safety threats. Consider hiring an independent auditor or asking a fellow manager to perform an additional inspection. Pay special attention to “pest hot spots” and make sure to monitor for signs of activity. Once you complete the assessment, review the results with your staff and assign everyone specific responsibilities to resolve any issues that could be problematic during the real thing. If you follow these steps, you’ll be better prepared for your next health inspection and can help avoid a negative headline or shutdown.



Now that you know how to help prevent pests in common hot spots within your restaurant, use our easy-reference checklist on the next pages to get your entire staff on board and improve your next inspection score.

BEFORE YOUR NEXT HEALTH INSPECTION...



CHECK THESE ITEMS OFF YOUR LIST

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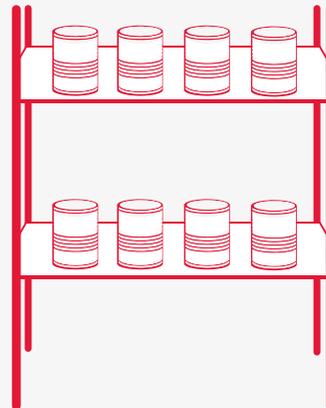


RECEIVING

- Accurate thermometers are available for sampling internal temperatures of food shipments.
- Receiving area is clean and well lit (to discourage pests).

DRY STORAGE

- All inventory is labeled and dated.
- All containers are airtight and undamaged.
- Dated containers are arranged for rotation on a first in, first out (FIFO) basis.
- Dry foods are stored off the floor and away from walls.
- Chemical cleaners are stored away from food and labeled.
- There is no sign of pest presence in storage area (check beneath and behind racks).



REFRIGERATED STORAGE

- All raw meat, poultry and fish is stored separately or below fresh, ready-to-eat foods.
- Prepared foods are stored in shallow pans, uncovered (to accelerate cooling to safe cold-storage temperature).
- All other food is stored in leak-proof containers, tightly covered with lids, plastic wrap or aluminum foil.

FOOD PREPARATION



- Every employee uses proper hand-washing technique:
 - Scrubs hands for 20 seconds with soap and water
 - Uses paper towels
 - Turns off water with the paper towel
- Food contact surfaces are in good repair, and are cleaned and sanitized regularly.
- Measures to prevent cross-contamination are in place. For example, cutting boards of different colors are used for meats and vegetables; countertops and cutting boards are washed, rinsed and sanitized after each use.
- Personnel with infections or communicable diseases are restricted from food handling areas.
- All food preparation sinks, dishwashers and ice machines are equipped with indirect drains to prevent sewage backups.

WASTE DISPOSAL

- Garbage does not pass through food preparation areas on its way to disposal.
- Garbage containers are covered and leak-proof.
- All outdoor garbage containers have tight-fitting lids.
- Garbage containers are cleaned and sanitized regularly, away from food preparation and storage areas.
- All employees follow proper hand-washing procedures after handling garbage.





DOCUMENTATION

- All of the following documentation is available for the inspector's review:
 - Annual permits
 - Hand-washing policy
 - Information on food safety training for staff
 - Staff list (all must have up-to-date food-handler cards)
 - Pest management documentation (including pest management company's license, service reports, pesticide usage logs and material safety data sheets)