

THINK LIKE *a* HEALTH Inspector

Pass your next inspection, improve food safety, and maintain your reputation.

A good restaurant must not only provide excellent food and service, but must also be clean and sanitary in its practices. New research from Technomic, a leading foodservice research firm, shows that diners in many U.S. cities consider restaurant cleanliness to be more important than the quality of the food.

There are so many things on the line during a health inspection, including your reputation, sales, and profits. If you are not prepared you may end up paying stiff fines, having frequent future inspections, or even being forced to close your doors.



Visit www.keepingitkleen.com
or ask your Maines
representative to learn more.

What's the absolute best way to make sure your restaurant is in tip-top shape for your next health inspection? Become your restaurant's health inspector for a day. Going through the motions of a health inspection helps you to understand what inspectors are looking for.

When conducting a self-assessment, you should use the same form—or a similar form—that your health department uses and put yourself in the health inspector's place. Below are some tips to get the most out of your day as a health inspector and help your restaurant reach its food safety potential.

- ✓ **Arrive unannounced.** Start in the parking lot and enter through the front door to give you a true health inspector's perspective. Make sure employees are unaware that your inspection will be happening, so you can catch your restaurant in its normal food safety state.
- ✓ **Contact your county to get an exact copy of the actual form your health inspector will use to evaluate your restaurant.** This will give you valuable insight into what your inspector is looking for and will ensure that you address all the important aspects of the inspection.
- ✓ **Conduct a thorough inspection.** Walk through your restaurant and be sure to check every single item that a health inspector might target. This is no time to be lenient. Write down any issue with food safety procedures that you see, so you can ensure that all food delivery, storage, and handling guidelines are being followed.
- ✓ **Educate Employees.** Your faux health inspection can become a useful training day for employees.
- ✓ **Thoroughly analyze your findings.** What issues did you identify during the course of your thorough walk-through? What can you and your staff do to fix these problems? Once you've made your staff aware of problems and demonstrated how to fix them, recheck often to ensure that they are addressed.

A good resource to help you pass health inspections and control foodborne illnesses is the new Keeping It Kleen program from Maines. Keeping It Kleen offers comprehensive programs and services, tips, checklists, employee training, and much more to help ensure that your employees are well versed in food safety practices.