



# A Retail Food Service Manager's Guide

## Overcoming Challenges - Food Contact Surfaces

Food establishment management and staff often encounter many challenges when it comes to cleaning of food contact surfaces and utensils.

Parts 4-6 and 4-7 of the 2013 FDA Food Code states that food contact surfaces, equipment surfaces, and utensils shall be clean to sight and touch, sanitized, and cleaned at particular frequencies using particular methods.

### Common Challenges

There are many challenges associated with cleaning and sanitizing food contact surfaces, but three main root causes can be directly correlated to controlling this hazard:

#### ***Staff Behavior***

- Pressure for speedy service and profits result in shortcuts being taken
- Wiping cloths are not stored in sanitizer buckets
- Frequency of cleaning and sanitizing is not meeting requirements
- Staff do not check warewashing equipment prior to use

#### ***Warewashing Equipment***

- Warewashing equipment is insufficient for demand
- Warewashing equipment is not maintained in good condition

#### ***Management Behavior***

- Employees not trained on:
  - Warewashing procedures and cleaning frequencies
  - Correct sanitizer levels and use of test strips
  - Operating and monitoring warewashing equipment
  - Proper use and storage of wiping cloths
- Managers may be under pressure for profits, causing food safety to be lower priority
- Lack of accountability/shared contribution to a food safety culture
- Management does not make time to monitor employees in kitchen

### Overcoming Challenges

There are effective options to consider when overcoming challenges related to cleaning and sanitizing food contact surfaces.

**Create Policies**  
**Train Staff**  
**Verify Policies are Working**

