

### **15A NCAC 18A .3306 FOOD STORAGE**

- (a) Opened food products shall be stored in approved, clean, tightly covered, storage containers. Containers shall be impervious and nonabsorbent.
- (b) Foods not stored in the product container or package in which it was obtained, shall be stored in a tightly covered, approved food storage container identifying the food by common name.
- (c) Food shall be stored above the floor in a manner that protects the food from splash and other contamination and that permits easy cleaning of the storage area.
- (d) Food and containers of food shall not be stored under exposed or unprotected sewer lines or water lines, except for automatic fire protection sprinkler heads that may be required by law. Food shall not be stored in toilet or laundry rooms, or other areas where there is a potential for contamination.
- (e) All food shall be stored in a manner to protect it from dust, insects, drip, splash and other contamination.
- (f) Packaged food such as milk or other fluid containers may be stored in undrained ice as long as any individual units are not submerged in water. Wrapped sandwiches shall not be stored in direct contact with ice.
- (g) Refrigerated storage:
  - (1) Refrigeration equipment shall be provided in such number and of such capacity to assure the maintenance of potentially hazardous food at required temperatures during storage. Each refrigerator shall be provided with a numerically scaled indicating thermometer, accurate to  $\pm 3^{\circ}\text{F}$  ( $\pm 1.5^{\circ}\text{C}$ ) located to measure the air temperature in the warmest part of the refrigerator and located to be easily readable. Recording thermometers, accurate to  $\pm 3^{\circ}\text{F}$  ( $\pm 1.5^{\circ}\text{C}$ ), may be used in lieu of indicating thermometers.
  - (2) Potentially hazardous food requiring refrigeration after preparation shall be cooled to an internal temperature of  $45^{\circ}\text{F}$  ( $7^{\circ}\text{C}$ ), or below. Cooling of potentially hazardous foods shall be initiated upon completion of preparation or a period of hot storage. Methods such as shallow pans, agitation, quick chilling or water circulation external to the food containers shall be used to cool large quantities of potentially hazardous food. Potentially hazardous food to be transported cold shall be prechilled and held at a temperature of  $45^{\circ}\text{F}$  ( $7^{\circ}\text{C}$ ) or below.
  - (3) Ice used for cooling stored food and food containers shall not be used for human consumption.
- (h) Hot storage:
  - (1) Hot food storage equipment shall be provided in such number and of such capacity to assure the maintenance of food at the required temperature during storage. Each hot food unit shall be provided with a numerically scaled indicating thermometer, accurate to  $\pm 3^{\circ}\text{F}$  ( $\pm 1.5^{\circ}\text{C}$ ), located to measure the air temperature in the coolest part of the unit and located to be easily readable. Recording thermometers, accurate to  $\pm 3^{\circ}\text{F}$  ( $\pm 1.5^{\circ}\text{C}$ ), may be used in lieu of indicating thermometers. Where it is impractical to install thermometers on equipment such as steam tables, steam kettles, heat lamps, cal-rod units, or insulated food transport carriers, a metal stem-type numerically scaled indicating product thermometer shall be available and used to check internal food temperature;
  - (2) The internal temperature of potentially hazardous foods requiring hot storage shall be  $140^{\circ}\text{F}$  ( $60^{\circ}\text{C}$ ) or above except during necessary periods of preparation and service. Potentially hazardous food to be transported hot shall be held at a temperature of  $140^{\circ}$  ( $60^{\circ}\text{C}$ ) or above.

*History Note: Authority G.S. 130A-285;  
Eff. August 1, 2002;  
Pursuant to G.S. 150B-21.3A, rule is necessary without substantive public interest Eff. July 20, 2019.*