



Restaurant

Situation:

Teton County has had an increased need for restaurant sanitation classes due to the number of restaurants in the county and the turnover of seasonal employees. For many years, Teton County has been using the ServSafe Starters course as an abbreviated version to the traditional two-day Managers ServSafe course taught throughout the state.

The Starters course allows employees to attend a four-hour class and gain insight and knowledge about proper food handling procedures without the strain on money and time for staff training, which is often lacking in the food service industry. ServSafe Starters is offered in both English and Spanish in Teton County. It was realized there was an increased need for restaurant sanitation classes in other locations in the West Area in both English and Spanish. In cooperation with the environmental health specialists in other counties, a decision was made to pilot ServSafe Starters in Sublette and Sweetwater counties.

The four-hour ServSafe Starters course involves various teaching methods and media use. The class is taught in conjunction with the environmental health specialists and the nutrition and food safety extension educator. Eleven ServSafe Starters classes were offered in the West Area throughout the year: seven in English and four in Spanish, with 170 people participating.

Impacts:

Participants ranged from restaurant workers and church volunteers to high school culinary arts students. Of the 170, 134 passed the 35-question final test with a score of 80 percent or greater, while 36 failed. The result is a 79-percent pass rate and a 21-percent fail rate. Participants can retake the class and retest without payment. This often results in a greater pass rate.

The 35-question test was created in Teton County. This test has been approved by county environmental health inspectors and covers the material taught. Participants must score 80 percent or greater to pass and receive a local ServSafe Starters certification card valid for three years.

Participants in the ServSafe Starters class gain knowledge of safe food handling with opportunities to ask questions outside their work environment. Those in the food service industry can work in their establishment with more knowledge of safe food handling practices, bring that to other establishments if they change jobs, and teach and influence coworkers. This leads to safer food handling throughout the counties and safer food for customers.

Through years of continued education, restaurant sanitation practices will be safer and lead to lower risks of food-borne illness.

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