

SOLANO COUNTY FOOD ESTABLISHMENT INSPECTION

2006-2007 Solano County Grand Jury Report

Reason for Investigation

Under authority of California Penal Code §925, the 2006-2007 Grand Jury elected to review the status of food establishment inspections in Solano County.

Grand Jury Action

- Reviewed California Uniform Retail Food Facilities Law
- Reviewed Solano County's Risk Based Food Inspection Program
- Reviewed data and information provided by the Solano County Department of Resource Management

Background/Summary

The Environmental Health Division of Solano County Department of Resource Management is responsible for conducting food establishment inspections as determined by the California Uniform Retail Food Facilities Law, Health and Safety Code sections 113700 - 113733. Solano County implemented the law in 2004. The Department uses the Risk Based Retail Food Inspection Program (food inspection program) to comply with that law.

The food inspection program identifies categories for retail food establishments as "Low Risk" or Type 1, "Medium Risk" or Type 2 and "High Risk" or Type 3. The category determines the number of inspections required yearly.

There are eight Environmental Health Specialist positions and one supervisor position assigned to the food inspection program. In 2006, the number of available inspectors was reduced to 6.2 full time equivalents because of vacancies, training, short-term absences and involvement in other programs.

The following table, covering the period January 1 - December 31, 2006, was compiled from information received from the Resource Management Department:

**ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH DIVISION
INSPECTIONS FOR 2006**

Risk Category	No. of Facilities		No. of Required Annual Inspections		No. of Re-Inspections		Total No. of Required Inspections		Actual No. of Inspections		No. of Inspections Not Done as Required
Type 3	475	X 3	1,425	+	234		1,659	-	1,287		372
Type 2	455	X 2	910	+	166		1,076	-	766		310
Type 1	416	X 1	416	+	172		588	-	446		142
Totals	1,346		2,751		572		3,323		2,499		824

Risk Category determines the number of annually required inspections:

e.g. Type 3 = 3 annual inspections required
 Type 2 = 2 annual inspections required
 Type 1 = 1 annual inspection required

Re-inspections are required when the initial inspection determines that a facility is out of compliance.

Total required inspections are the sum of required inspections and required re-inspections

Findings and Recommendations

Finding 1 - The Environmental Health Specialists assigned to conduct food facility inspections are not fully used to accomplish this task.

Recommendation 1 - The staff assigned to the Environmental Health Department for food facility inspections should be used for that activity and not assigned to other programs.

Finding 2 - The standards set in the Risk Based Food Inspection Program are not being met.

Recommendation 2 – Solano County Department of Resource Management should take steps to ensure that program minimum standards are met.

Comments

The table clearly shows the number of inspections and re-inspections done by the Department are far short of inspections required by the Risk Based Food Inspection Program.

The failures displayed in the preceding table should not be allowed to continue. The lack of reported food-caused illness in Solano County should not be a factor in failing to complete the required inspections. Re-inspections were necessary at over 570 food establishments after the initial inspection found them out of compliance. Food borne illness prevention and citizen safety should be the primary concern.

Affected Agencies

- Solano County Department of Resource Management
- Solano County Board of Supervisors