



ICE MACHINE SANITATION & MAINTENANCE

Ice is routinely used in food service operations for food preparation and most frequently in beverages served. Providing ice from a tested and approved potable water system is absolutely critical. Ice may become contaminated from the use of impure water, contamination from unclean ice machines, improper storage practices, or poor handling by food employees. The following practices should be implemented to reduce or eliminate the potential contamination of ice, ice machines, and dispensing equipment:

- All water used for ice must be from approved sources, regularly sampled and tested for microbiological contaminants.
- Train employees to use an ice scoop to transfer ice, holding the scoop by the handle only. Do not use drinking glasses or hands to scoop ice.
- When possible use ice machines that dispense directly into containers at the touch of a control. This provides a more sanitary method for handling ice.
- Regularly clean and sanitize ice scoops. Do not store utensils in ice or machines as the handles can contaminate ice sources.
- Use ice scoops that are only constructed of food grade materials.
- Keep ice machine doors tightly closed when not in use to prevent potential contamination from environmental conditions.
- Ice used for cooling food, refrigerating canned and bottled drinks or any other purpose should never be reused for consumption or returned to the machine.
- Do not store items such as ash trays, chemicals, drinks, or medications on top of ice machines due to potential unintended spills contaminating ice.
- Implement routine maintenance and cleaning schedules for ice machines. Schedule ice machine cleaning as often as required to maintain the units in clean sanitary condition.

- To properly clean an ice machine, the unit must be completely shut down, remove or discard all ice allowing the unit to warm to room temperature then wash, rinse, sanitize all surfaces and allow to air dry.
- Scale buildups from hard water, molds, and other visible contaminants must be cleaned from ice machines parts as often as required to maintain the units in clean sanitary condition. Plastic shields in units with condensate dripping onto ice must be kept clean of mold and microbiological growths.
- Follow manufacturer's recommended cleaning and sanitizing schedules for internal ice making and removable parts.
- If testing ice, remove and melt ice aseptically in a sterile container provided by a local health department or approved lab and complete quantitative plate counts on the resulting water.