

## DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE, TRADE AND CONSUMER PROTECTION NOTICE OF PROPOSED GUIDANCE DOCUMENTS

Pursuant to section 227.112 of the Wisconsin Statutes, the Wisconsin Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection (DATCP) is hereby accepting comments on the proposed guidance document:

### Condensation Management in a Meat Establishment

#### LOCATION OF PROPOSED GUIDANCE

Proposed guidance document may be reviewed by accessing:

[https://datcp.wi.gov/Pages/About\\_Us/GuidanceDocuments.aspx](https://datcp.wi.gov/Pages/About_Us/GuidanceDocuments.aspx)

#### SUBMITTING PUBLIC COMMENTS

Public comments on proposed or adopted guidance document may be submitted by accessing:

[https://datcp.wi.gov/Pages/About\\_Us/GuidanceDocuments.aspx](https://datcp.wi.gov/Pages/About_Us/GuidanceDocuments.aspx)

#### DEADLINE FOR SUBMISSION

The comment period will run no fewer than 21 days after the publication of this document in the Administrative Register.

#### AGENCY PUBLICATION

The attached guidance document contains statements or interpretations of law under the following applicable provisions of federal law or the applicable state statutory or administrative code provisions: Wis. Stat. 97 Subchapter II, Wis. Admin. Code, ch. 55.

#### CERTIFICATION

Pursuant to the authority delegated to me by the Secretary, I have reviewed the attached guidance document or proposed guidance document and I certify that it complies with sections 227.10 and 227.11 of the Wisconsin Statutes. I further certify that the guidance document or proposed guidance document contains no standard, requirement, or threshold that is not explicitly required or explicitly permitted by a statute or a rule that has been lawfully promulgated. I further certify that the guidance document or proposed guidance document contains no standard, requirement, or threshold that is more restrictive than a standard, requirement, or threshold contained in the Wisconsin Statutes.

  
Steve Ingham  
Administrator  
Division of Food and Recreational Safety



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GUIDANCE DOCUMENT

## Guidance Document Title: Condensation Management in a Meat Establishment

*This guidance document is based on Wis. Stat. 97 Subchapter II and chapter ATCP 55 Wis. Admin. Code. This document is intended solely as guidance, and does not contain any mandatory requirements except where requirements found in statute or administrative rule are referenced. This guidance does not establish or affect legal rights or obligations, and is not finally determinative of any of the issues addressed.*

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Steven Ingham, Ph.D. - Administrator, Division of Food and Recreational Safety

February 12, 2020

DATE

Contributors:



## Wisconsin Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection

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### Compliance Guidance Document WI Statute Chapter 97.42, WI Rule ATCP 55.07

## Condensation Management in a Meat Establishment

**9 CFR 416.2(d) states:** *Ventilation adequate to control odors, vapors, and condensation to the extent necessary to prevent adulteration of product and the creation of insanitary conditions must be provided.*

Refrigeration units in coolers and freezers need to be of size and capacity to provide adequate air movement, allowing for the moisture in the air to flow through the unit to remove moisture in the air. The dehumidifier property of the refrigeration unit reduces the likelihood of the formation of condensation which could create an insanitary condition and/or adulteration of product.

Tips for keeping refrigeration units working at optimum efficiency:

- Keep the 'fins' and the fan covers clean and free of dust accumulation. Vacuuming the dust and other debris from these areas will allow air movement through the refrigeration unit. Adequate air movement is necessary for efficient removal of moisture from the air.
- Periodic cleaning of refrigeration units using warm, low flow water pressure, mild soap (such as Dawn dishwashing liquid, and a warm water rinse. It is better to clean refrigeration units on a regular schedule, prior to 'as needed'. A regular cleaning schedule of the refrigeration unit assures it will operate most efficiently. Cleaning only when it looks 'dirty' could mean the unit has been laboring to keep up with relative humidity and high load capacity.
- Check to see if the drain pipes and tubing are clear, and if there is visual mold build-up within the clear tubing. Partially blocked or fully blocked drain pipes can cause dripping at bends or joints in the piping.
- For those refrigeration units located in a cooler that stores both raw and ready-to-eat products, placing a quaternary ammonia sanitizing block, or an iodine sanitizing block, in the drip pan will reduce the likelihood of the presence of *Listeria monocytogenes* in the condensate.
- Check door seals for sound condition. Broken or missing seals will allow warm, moist air to continuously enter the product cooler, creating a humid environment the refrigeration unit cannot handle.

Condensation may be an unavoidable consequence of certain types of operations. When condensation occurs, Inspection Personnel are to consider whether Establishment Management has assessed the cause of the condensation and implemented reasonable measures to manage it.

A procedure for assessment of the cause of condensation would most likely be written in the Sanitation Standard Operating Procedures (SSOP). Once an assessment has been completed, the Establishment Management will have identified procedures they will put in place to minimize the potential for the condensation to cause insanitary conditions or adulteration of product.

For example, Establishment Management has determined the refrigeration unit in the cooler is not adequate in preventing condensation from forming on the ceiling in front of the cooling unit fans. The SSOP has written procedures that indicate a plant employee will monitor this area on an hourly basis and remove condensation with a clean mop on an extended handle. This monitoring procedure will be recorded on the SSOP monitoring log, initialed by the plant employee who performed the monitoring activity. The monitoring entry may also include the time, although time is not a recordkeeping requirement for SSOP records.

In this situation, Inspection Personnel determine that the Establishment is in compliance with 9 CFR 416.2(d) because they have taken reasonable measures to minimize the condensation.

In another example, Establishment Management has determined the carcass cooler has many carcasses stored and volume may be at or beyond the capacity of the cooling unit in removing moisture from the air. Management has placed two additional fans in the cooler, to increase air movement to the cooling unit and to minimize the potential of condensation. Management has observed condensation in the same area of the cooler each morning and has determined carcasses will not be stored in that area of the cooler overnight to prevent the possibility of dripping condensation causing insanitary conditions on carcasses stored below.

When performing an inspection verification activity, Inspection Personnel observe condensation dripping from that area of the ceiling, but no carcasses are stored below. The extra fans are operational, and the plant monitor has begun wiping down the condensation created the previous night, prior to the beginning of operations. Inspection Personnel determine that the Establishment is in compliance with 9 CFR 416.2(d) because they have taken reasonable measures to eliminate the creation of insanitary conditions even though the creation of condensation could not be eliminated.

In a final example, Inspection Personnel verify the conditions of a finished product storage freezer. The Inspector finds a frost build-up around the doorway, as well as frozen condensate covering boxes of finished product. It is uncertain if the frozen condensate has adulterated finished product, and so the Inspector requests Establishment Management to open several boxes. It is verified the ice has not contacted the fully packaged product inside the boxes. Establishment Management then ensures that the boxes are free from ice and adequately resealed.

Next, Inspection Personnel will determine if the frozen condensate has created an insanitary condition. A review of the written SSOP indicates the potential for condensation conditions in the freezer have not been written in the plan; no monitoring procedures are being implemented as found during a records review. Inspection Personnel will document noncompliance with 9 CFR 416.2(d).