



Environmental Services
Department

Increasing Ventilation in Food Establishments – COVID-19 Guidance

The CDC has recommended that ventilation systems operate properly and to also increase circulation of outdoor air as much as possible, for example by opening windows and doors and prioritizing outdoor seating, to help lower the risk of COVID-19 exposure and spread. This increasing ventilation guidance shall be valid for the duration of the COVID-19 public health state of emergency as declared by the Governor of Arizona and shall expire when the state of emergency ends. According to the FDA Food Code §6-202.15, outer openings must be protected from insects and rodents as they are vectors of disease-causing microorganisms which may be transmitted to humans by contamination of food and food-contact surfaces.

If the windows or doors of a food establishment are kept open for ventilation or other purposes, the openings must be protected against the entry of insects and rodents by one of the following:

1. Screens (16 mesh* to 1 inch, at a minimum)
2. Air curtains
 - a. All air curtains must meet NSF Standard 37**.
 - b. Install an air curtain so that a layer of fast-moving air is produced vertically downward and directed to blow outward.
 - c. The flow of air must run parallel and within 1 inch, inside or outside, across the entire width of the opening.
 - d. Minimum air velocities are a 3-inch column of air at 1600-feet per minute measured at 3-feet above the floor for service entrances, and an 8-inch column of air at 600-feet per minute at customer entrances.
 - e. All air curtains shall be controlled by approved door-activated micro-switches.
3. Other Effective Means – No prior Department approval required
 - a. Develop a comprehensive Integrated Pest Management Plan*** with your pest control company to address insects and rodents.
 - b. Develop an Active Managerial Control Plan (see link below for guidance).
 - i. The plan should include regular monitoring of both the interior and exterior of the facility.
4. Other Effective Means – Prior Department approval required
 - a. Please contact your inspector if an alternate approach is being implemented.

❖ Please note that the premises must be maintained free of insects, rodents, and other pests (FDA Food Code §6-501.111).

RESOURCES

Active Managerial Control Template <https://www.maricopa.gov/DocumentCenter/View/42489/Active-Managerial-Control-PolicyBlank-Template---General-Use-PDF>

CDC Guidance: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/organizations/business-employers/bars-restaurants.html>

**Clarification of terms used in this document:*

<https://www.maricopa.gov/DocumentCenter/View/65227/Ventilation-Guidance-FootnotesDefinitions-PDF>