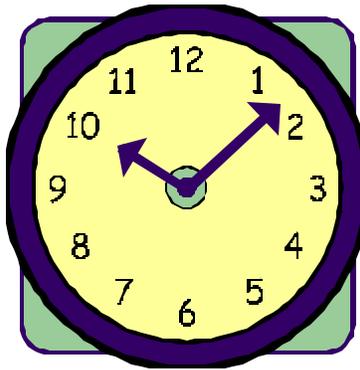


Time as a Public Health Control

Wisconsin Food Code Fact Sheet #15

Using time as a public health control means that, when properly implemented, food may be offered for sale at room temperature for up to four hours. All food must be properly cooked and/or cooled before using time as a public health control.

The operator must have **approved written procedures** on premise. The operator will need to work with his/her inspector to determine what will be suitable procedures for their process.



The maximum time the food can be held out at room temperature is **four (4) hours**.

Each food item must be clearly marked with the date and a time that explains when the food must be sold by or discarded. If several ready-to-eat foods are combined in one product to remain out at room temperature, the four-hour time period begins at the time the first product is put out.

Time as a public health control can be used for:

- **A working supply of potentially hazardous food if the food is properly cooked and served immediately after preparation (i.e., omelet ingredients at an omelet bar)**
- **A working supply of ready-to-eat, potentially hazardous food that is assembled and served for immediate consumption (i.e., custom-made sandwiches)**
- **All ready prepared, ready-to-eat, potentially hazardous food that is displayed or held to be served for immediate consumption (i.e., sandwiches already made and wrapped and on display for sale)**

If time as a public health control is used, all the food must be sold or discarded within four (4) hours. No food may be reused.

Food must also be discarded when:

- It is displayed/held in unmarked containers or packages, or
- It is marked improperly.

Record logs should be kept and should include the following items:

- The name of the food
- The time the food was put out at room temperature and the time any food was discarded
- The amount of food kept at room temperature, and the amount of food discarded after four (4) hours