



Safety Talks

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We're also on the web:

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Study finds offices are breeding grounds for germs.



More germs are hiding out on your office desk than in your facility's restroom, according to a new study conducted by the University of Arizona for the Clorox Co. The study of more than 100 offices also found women have three to four times more bacteria in their workspace areas than men because women had more items on display, such as lotions and photos, creating additional surface areas on which germs can rest. Also, women were more likely to keep snack foods in their workspaces, which create "nesting grounds" for bacteria. Male employees are not off the hook, however: their wallets and personal electronic devices are by far the germiest objects in the office.

Germiest Jobs – ranked from most germey to least germey

1. Teacher (averaged 17,800 bacteria per square inch)
2. Accountant (averaged 6,030 bacteria per square inch)
3. Banker (averaged 5,400 bacteria per square inch)
4. Radio DJ (averaged 3,323 bacteria per square inch)
5. Doctor (averaged 2,620 bacteria per square inch)
6. Television Producer (averaged 2,460 bacteria per square inch)
7. Consultant (averaged 1,250 bacteria per square inch)
8. Publicist (averaged 1,020 bacteria per square inch)
9. Lawyer (averaged 900 bacteria per square inch)

To read the full study, visit http://www.clorox.com/pdf/office_study.pdf

(Source: NSC Membership News Alert Message--February 23, 2007)

Do You Need To Sign Up? - Required Chemical Safety training

All Old Dominion University employees who work with chemicals are required to attend one of two chemical safety trainings offered by the Environmental Health and Safety Office. Laboratory safety training is offered to employees who work with chemicals in laboratories. Hazard Communication training is offered to employees who work with chemicals in non-laboratory settings.

If you or any of you employees work with chemicals and have not attended one of these trainings, please contact the Environmental Health and Safety Office at 683-4495 to schedule for the next available session.



The mission of Recoverable Resources is to remove as much recyclable material from the university waste stream as possible, while providing the best and most efficient service to our customers. It is the responsibility of everyone at Old Dominion University to help develop a more environmentally sustainable campus and we encourage this by emphasizing student and faculty participation.

To read more about University Recycling and to see what they recycle, contact them at (757) 451-3015 or hlogan@odu.edu or visit their website at www.odu.edu/af/facilities/recycling



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Virtual Food Safety Specialist “Ask Karen”.



Karen is a virtual representative trained to answer your questions about the safe storage, preparation and handling of meat and poultry products. With a database of more than 9,300 food safety questions maintained by the hotline, “Ask Karen”, a virtual representative or vRep, is available 24/7 worldwide. Karen can also answer questions about the prevention of foodborne illness and disease. Though this is not a live chat, please feel free to converse naturally with Karen. The more questions people ask, the smarter she will become.

How can this innovative Web tool help you? Say you forgot to put your dinner leftovers in the refrigerator. Now, you’re ready for a 3:00 a.m. snack. But are these morsels still safe to eat? Or, maybe you’re traveling, writing a newsletter in the early hours of the morning, and you need the answer to a food safety question. Is there anybody awake you ask. It doesn’t matter if it’s 3 o’clock in the afternoon or 3 o’clock in the morning. Because “Ask Karen” is available on the Food Safety and Inspection Service (FSIS) Web site, you can type your question at any time, from any place. Since it’s launch in April 2004, more than 29,000 customers have done just that and asked more than 91,000 questions.

Sample Questions

Not sure what types of questions to ask Karen? Here is a list of frequently asked questions to help get you started:

- Should I use a food thermometer when cooking meat?
- How long does food stay safe during a power outage?
- What are the safest ways to thaw foods?
- Should I use a wooden cutting board or a plastic one?
- How can I tell if chicken is spoiled?
- If food has mold, is it safe to eat?

In addition to responding instantaneously with answers, this cutting edge tool provides links to other Web pages with additional information. Not to sure what to ask? Choose questions by category. By clicking the “Help” button, you’ll find more than 100 categories from which to choose. Questions in the database relate to meat, poultry and egg products, safe handling, food storage, food preparation, food inspection, food recalls and many other topics.



Visit **ASK KAREN** at www.fsis.usda.gov
Click on “I Want To ... Ask A
Food Safety Question”

Call the **USDA Meat & Poultry Hotline**
1-888-MPHOTLINE (1-888-674-6854)

The banner features two circular images: on the left, a woman in a white lab coat holding a clipboard with “be food safe” written on it; on the right, a woman wearing a headset and talking on a phone while sitting at a computer workstation.

For more information on this tool, please call the USDA Meat and Poultry Hotline at 1-888-MPHotline, TTY 1-800-256-7072, or send an Email to mpholine.fsis@usda.gov.

(source: FoodSafe: The FSIS Magazine, “Ask Karen” article Fall 2006)