

**Nevada Food Safety Task Force**  
**August 24, 2006**  
**Meeting Minutes**

**Luxor Hotel Casino --- Las Vegas, Nevada**

Robert Sobsey, Lead Chairperson, called the August 24, 2006 meeting of the Nevada Food Safety Task Forces to order at 9:30 AM. The following members were in attendance: Robert Sobsey, Washoe County District Health Department (WCHD); Bryan Wagner, WCHD; Kathleen Hanley, WCHD, Tony Macaluso, WCHD; Robbin Rose, WCHD; David McNinch, WCHD; Bob Morin, Gold Dust West (GDW); Ann Anders, Bellagio; Kathy Stewart, Nevada Dept. of Education (NDOE); Anna Vickery, Nevada Dairy Commission (NDC); Larue Conley, Boyd Gaming; Teresa Hayes, Caron City Health Department (CCHD); Joe Iser, Food and Drug Administration (FDA); Jimmy Vigilante, MGM Mirage Corp.; Linda Newton, Southern Nevada Health District (SNHD); Marcella Gelman, Vons; Dave McClure, Darden Restaurants; John Smith, Stratosphere; John Wellean, Venetian; Alex Stokes, Wynn Resorts; Chad Weston, Nevada State Health Division (NSHD); Erica Ryan, NSHD, Catherine Jacobi, NRA

The minutes of the June 7, 2006 meeting were approved as submitted.

The following agenda items were discussed:

The purpose of the health departments' foodborne illness/outbreak investigations and information gathering process at food establishments was discussed. The four health districts present (WCHD, SNHD, CCHD, and NSHD), the NDC and FDA, using similar investigative techniques,

- Triaged or screened complaints in some manner
- Responded to complaints by varying levels
- Investigated all outbreaks to protect the public health
- Invested non-food related incidents

CCHD had a method in place to monitor the increase usage of anti-diarrheal products after street events. (National Data Retail Monitoring through the University of Pittsburg – referencing pharmacy zip codes)

The NSHD reported that they also work with the epidemiologist and follow events in nursing homes and hospitals.

The FDA reported that they were move involved with interstate complaints and monitoring of point of origin.

The industry foodborne illness/outbreak investigations and information gathering process at food establishments was also discussed. The properties present in generally agreed that the focus of their investigations was to isolate and prevent the spread of foodborne or non-foodborne, contagious illness on their property to minimize impact of negative tourism media. The

industries present stated that they had good communication and had cooperation between properties based on self-developed networks. The properties had developed investigation techniques that:

- Triaged or screened complaints in some manner
- Internally monitored employees attendance
- Internally monitored symptoms that could indicate increased risk due to contact. Only one property indicated a sick-leave policy that excluded employee attendance when presenting symptoms indicated possible communicable illnesses.
- Checklists could only be shared after approval at the corporate level.
- Indicated that a regulatory requirement regarding sick leave that excluded employee attendance when presenting symptoms indicated a possible communicable illness was desirable.
- Education of unions would be necessary.
- Health Information Privacy Act (HIPPA) would have to be addressed.

Comparison of complaint logs for standardized information collection was to be completed by John Marcello and a matrix created. John Marcello was unable to attend so the topic will be tabled for discussion until the next meeting.

Standardization of agency follow-up systems and the transfer of information between entities were also discussed. Grocery industry advised that information is shared through retailer groups in Nevada. SNHD advised that there had not been any bioterrorist training interaction with industry. The FDA representative advised that there were two training specialists available for preparedness training. There is also a one-day course available from the University of California, Davis – Western Institute for Food.

The regulatory group met on August 23, 2006. A membership letter of understanding was discussed. There are 446 food-processing plants, but all are not used in all counties. The Attorney Generals office helped with the discussion of an interim approach. The discussion was continuing. A consumer complaints process was to be discussed at the next meeting.

Action Item: Use of the grant funds. Suggestions for purchase of gadgets to promote visibility of the task force were suggested. An upscale poster promoting hand washing with a raccoon encircled with good hand washing technique steps was also suggested. Discussion also included purchase of thermometers with or without NFSTF embossed on thermometer holders.

There was discussion of the possible development of a NFSTF logo. Members were encouraged to design such a logo and present them at the next meeting for further discussion & approval. Robbin Rose who suggested development of a logo for NFSTF, mentioned this could be a contest.

The website has been upgraded. Members generally agreed that the improvements were positive. However, the task force membership list needs to be updated from 2003. . There was a request to have the webmaster submit a list of suggestions to make the site more user-friendly.

There was a suggestion to recruit more Nevada Industry Participation, particularly in the North. There was a suggestion to ask the National Restaurant Association to assist in the recruitment of both industry and academia (North and South). Northern representatives were asked to advance task force recognition and participation in the North if possible. Networking with the Chef's Association was also suggested.

National Restaurant Association (NRA) representative presented information on the hand washing campaign underway for September's hand washing month. The NRA has a hand-on-a-stick (Popsicle style) available for printing and use during the month. The steps of hand washing are on the back in both English and Spanish versions.

It was moved by Ann Anders and seconded by Anna Vickery to move forward with the hand washing poster and to seek an artist's rendition for the poster. Discretionary authority was granted to the chairperson and the treasurer to spend and/or encumber the balance of the grant funds for advertising and the poster by September 30<sup>th</sup>.

Linda Newton discussed the newly developed NFSTF membership application and it's role in tracking members who remain active participants. The requirement of yearly membership application renewal was one such item agreed upon.

The by-law review committee was thanked for their work to date. The membership form was to be revised to remove the physical residence address and add an email address. A logo will be developed and added to the form. Questions about addition of a requirement for a privacy statement and submission method that would create a database were discussed. This would allow all membership activity to be handled via the internet, regardless of the location of the membership chair.

The by-laws were read by Brian Wagner. The revised by-laws would:

- Create a position for secretary

Discussion of the by-laws commenced with suggestions being accepted from the floor. Recommendations were made for the:

- Addition of a definition for a member.
- Addition of a definition and distinction between a delegate and a member.
  - Regulatory
  - Industry
  - Academia
  - General
- Definitions for regular votes and proxy votes in a voting section.
- Job descriptions for Lead chair and secretary to be added.
- Alternate chair and distinction of when the alternate chair would assume control of the task force.
- A review by the district attorneys for open meeting requirements was to be facilitated by Chad Wesson, Robbin Rose, and Linda Newton.

The by-laws were sent back to committee for continued revision and discussion. The by-laws are to be presented again at the next meeting.

Bob Morin reported that House Resolution 4167 had seen no action since the last meeting and would likely remain tabled in the Senate through the end of the year. (The measure had been approved in the House.)

The next meeting will be December 6<sup>th</sup> in the Reno/Tahoe area, location to be announced.