American Latex Allergy Association

Food Service in Rhode Island

Office of Food Protection: THE LATEX GLOVES SAFETY ACT

The Latex Gloves Safety Act has been added to Chapter 23 of the General Laws entitled ?Health and Safety.? The law was effective 7/13/2001. The sections of the law that impact food service establishments are as follows:

23-72-2. Use of latex gloves. - (a) the use of disposable, nonsterile and sterile naturalrubber latex gloves shall be prohibited by any person, firm, or corporation, registered pursuant to sections 21-27-10 and 21-27-11. (This bill does not ban latex gloves in food or other establishments licensed under different statutes (eg. milk or shellfish plants) though we would still recommend non latex in these places.)

23-72-4. Enforcement. - It shall be the duty of the director of the department of health to enforce the provisions of this chapter and to prosecute all persons who violate this chapter.

23-72-5. Penalty. - Any person, firm, or corporation, which is regulated by Rhode Island general laws, which violates any of the provisions of this chapter shall be subject to a fine of five hundred dollars ($500), and may be subject to any and all penalties provided for in Rhode Island general laws which regulate said industry, including revocation of licenses.

The essence of the law is: **latex gloves are banned from use by all food service establishments and food stores licensed by the Office of Food Protection**. This includes hospital and nursing home food service operations. Latex gloves may still be used in the patient care parts of health care facilities; however, the rules and regulations and notification sections of this law must be met. Alternatives to latex gloves include vinyl, nitrile, and synthetics.

If latex gloves are observed in food service establishments, please inform the person in charge of the new law and inform them that they must immediately obtain and use non latex alternatives.

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