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Restaurant health checks — fair or foul-

By KAREN CORNELISON

WHAT GOES ON behind the scenes at the restaurants where you

Ruth Maddox is one of the five sanitarians working for the Brazos County Health Department. One of her responsibilities is inspecting restaurants in the Bryan-College Station area and filling out a "report

The report card is actually the Texas Department of Health Food Service Establishment Inspection Report. It lists 44 items, weighted from one to five points in importance, which must be evaluated as satisfactory or unsatisfactory. A score of 100 is the highest possible.

If, for example, the original container of a food is not properly labeled, one point is subtracted from 100. But if potentially hazardous food is not stored properly, five

points are subtracted. "Hardly anybody gets a perfect score," Maddox said. There are always a few minor things wrong. These have to be corrected by the time we come back, usually once a

MADDOX INSPECTED TWO restaurants April 18, giving neither one a warning. Each inspection took

approximately 45 minutes.

Restaurant A had an overall clean appearance. Maddox informed the

In Houston

manager of her inspection, and began. She opened flour bins, checked meat cutters and can openers for cleanliness, inspected the freezer and refrigerator to see that foods were covered, and even checked the temperatures

She watched the dishwasher in operation and checked the water

with litmus paper for correct pH.

Next Maddox looked at the ovens, stoves and food warmers, also checking the temperatures of the warmed foods, (which must be kept at 140 degrees Fahrenheit). There should be no accumulation of grease which could drip on cooking food,

There must be hot and cold running water in the kitchens and restrooms. Maddox tested each sink, flushed every toilet, and checked for soap, towels and waste receptacles in the restrooms.

WITH A FLASHLIGHT, she looked between boxes and under cabinets. Those are the places where insects and rat droppings are usually found, she said.

Dishes were checked for dust and cracks which are hard to disinfect. Once the inspection was completed, she filled out the form and

talked to the assistant manager.

"How did we do?" he asked.

"Pretty well," Maddox answered. You got a 90.

The points subtracted were for relatively minor violations: the handle of the ice scoop was resting on the ice; there was a small leak in the ceiling of the employees re-stroom; some of the food in the freezer, although wrapped, was resting on the floor rather than on

smoking while washing dishes. Restaurant B was a different

shelves; and one employee was

THE KITCHEN DIDN'T LOOK or smell clean. Maddox walked in, took one look at a large screencovered cabinet containing several cuts of cooked meat stored at room temperature, and began writing. The manager interrupted her.

"Let's sit down and talk about this," he said. Maddox reminded him she had complained about the meat storage violation last month,

HATE DOING *

Aunt Frannies Laundromat Holleman at Anderson 693-6587 and it was supposed to have been corrected.

"Believe it or not, that cabinet was cleaned this morning," he said. 'It tends to get dirty in a hurry when you put four to five hundred pounds of meat in there a day." He explained that he only cooked enough meat for one day, and that all the meat being stored would be served to customers by noon the next day. It's still not acceptable, Maddox said. The manager agreed to call the head sanitarian and work the problem out with him.

"MOST RESTAURANTS ARE COOPERATIVE," Maddox said later. "A few places I don't like because they make excuses. They know what has to be done, they just don't do it.

Maddox took the internal temperature of some potato salad, which was a few degrees too warm. The condiments were sitting at room temperature, and a fly or two could be seen crawling on the onions. Grease was caked on the oven. There were open sacks of onions and potatoes sitting on the floor of the

Despite these conditions, Restaurant B got a rating of 89 — only one point lower than Restaurant A.

There are a lot of things bad about the new form we're using," Maddox said. Although there were many instances of improper food storage in Restaurant B's kitchen, it was only docked a few points — the inspectors can take off only once for

the same violation.

THE MANAGERS OF THESE lunch, it would give us a chance to two restaurants said they think the health inspections are fair — for the most part.

'It depends on the mood they (the sanitarians) are in," said the assistant manager of Restaurant A. "Sometimes they'll nitpick; sometimes they'll look at things and other times they won't.

'They are fair," Restaurant B's manager said about health inspec- said A.C. Allen, head sanitarian. He an odd time - like right after lunch. mines when they inspect restaur-If they came maybe an hour after ants. When it's not raining, they in-

Ruth Maddox checks the hot and cold running water in "Restaurant B." Despite what were apparently much more severe violations than

He also mentioned that they had had no inspection for almost two years at one time, but they had been inspected about once a month for the past three or four months. "It strikes me kinda weird," he said.

'WE DON'T SCHEDULE a certain inspection at a certain time, "But sometimes they come at explained that the weather deter-

spect septic tanks. When the O.K., but if people sawther weather's bad, they inspect restaurthey wouldn't want to eat the

An inspection is conducted im- staurant A's assistant manage mediately, however, when a com- posting a grade. But he s plaint is made against a restaurant. In some cities, such as New York,

the health department gives a rating — A, B, C or D — to each restaurant. The manager must display the grade so his patrons know how well the restaurant fared in an inspec-

"I wish they would do it here," Maddox said. "Some places look

'I could say yes to that," sa

"Restaurant A," there was only a different

one point of 100 possible between the two

thought two or three people's inspect the restaurant so the person's bias would not deter the grade. Restaurant B's manager age

"I think it would be fair," he "It would make the owner aware if the manager was ke things in shape, and make the trons aware, too.

Say what? **Nuclear safety** gobbledygook

THE GRAND TRADITION OF

N THE GRAND TRADITION OF IDD TEXAS WHERE MOTHER AUGHT DAUGHTER THE FINE RT OF SEWING — SO HELEN IARRIE TAUGHT EDITH MARIE HE SECRETS OF SEWING AND LTERATIONS.

DON'T GIVE UP - WE'LL

United Press International WASHINGTON — Listening to Nuclear Regulatory Commission discussions is like trying to follow a United Nations debate without earphones — nothing is in English.

For example, the five safety criteria set by nuclear reactor regulatory chief Harold Denton for the Babcock and Wilcox plants ordered shut down were referred to in formal letters from the utility companies as "items A

What are the safety changes

that must be made, according to the document?

"A) — Reviewing and upgrading, as appropriate, auxiliary feed reliability and performance (timeliness). "B) — Reviewing results of

FMEA analysis of ICS and taking actions, as to reduce its likelihood of initiating or exacerbating transients.

"C) — Hard wiring anticipatory scram based on FW tran-

"D) - Reviewing detailed

transients to effects of HPI in tion, and return to natural d lation cooling.
"E) — Reviewing new a

augmented standing instruct and emergency procedured plant operators developed a result of A-D above. In English, this means the

plants are shut down until the comply with safety recommendations to improve to emergency cooling waters tems, modify certain equipme develop better emergency pr cedures and improve open

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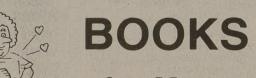
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