

# **FOOD SAFETY**

## **After A Fire**

Whether it is the whole facility involved or just in the kitchen, a fire can be detrimental to your operation and the safety of your food supply.

Food exposed to fire can be compromised by three factors: the heat from the fire, smoke fumes, and the chemicals used to fight the fire.

The person in charge must contact the Shelby City Health Department and inform them of the occurrence of the fire. (342-5226 or 347-5131). Provide the time and date the fire occurred and precautions taken.

### **I. Heat From A Fire**

- All foods that are exposed to the heat from a fire are subject to elevated temperatures and spoilage.
- Even if potentially hazardous foods are stored in refrigerators or freezers, they are subject to elevated temperatures from a fire.
- Food that is in cans or jars may appear to be okay but if they have been close to the heat of the fire, they may no longer be edible.
- Heat from a fire can activate food spoilage bacteria. If the heat is extreme. The cans or jars can split or rupture rendering the food unsafe.

### **II. Fumes From A Fire**

- Any type of food stored in permeable packaging such as cardboard or plastic must be discarded. Toxic fumes can permeate the packaging and contaminate the food.
- Refrigerator seals are not airtight so fumes can get inside. If food from your refrigerator has an off-flavor or smell, it must be discarded.
- Discard any raw foods stored outside of any refrigerator or freezer that have been subjected to fumes.
- All single-service items and linens must be discarded if subjected to fumes.

### **III. Chemicals Used In A Fire**

- Chemicals used to fight fires contain toxic materials and can contaminate food and cookware.
- The chemicals cannot be washed off the foods.
- Foods that are exposed to chemicals must be thrown away.
- This includes foods stored at room temperatures such as fruits and vegetables, as well as foods stored in permeable containers such as cardboard and screw-topped jars and bottles.
- Canned goods and cookware exposed to chemicals can be decontaminated. Wash in a strong detergent solution and then dip in a bleach solution.