**Busting 4 Common Food Safety Myths**

The Partnership for Food Safety Education answers 4 common food safety myths.

**Myth:** Leftovers are safe to eat until they smell bad.

**Fact:** Most people would not choose to eat spoiled, smelly food. But if they did, they would not necessarily get sick. This is because there are different types of bacteria, some of which cause illness in people and others that don’t. The types of bacteria that do cause illness don’t affect the taste, smell, or appearance of food. That’s why it’s important to freeze or toss out refrigerated leftovers within 3–4 days. If you’re unsure how long your leftovers have been sitting in the refrigerator, don’t take the risk — when in doubt, throw it out!

**Myth: I don’t need to wash my produce if I’m going to peel it.**

**Fact:** You should wash fresh fruits and vegetables under running tap water just before eating, cutting, or cooking them. Harmful bacteria could be on the outside of the produce. If you peel or cut produce without first washing it the bacteria could be transferred to the part you eat. Wash delicate produce such as grapes or lettuce under cool running water. Blot dry with a clean cloth towel or paper towel. Rub firm-skinned fruits and vegetables under running tap water or scrub with a clean produce brush. Never use detergent or bleach to wash fresh fruits or vegetables. These products are not intended for consumption.

**Myth: I use bleach and water to sanitize my countertops and the more bleach I use the more bacteria I kill.**

**Fact:** There is no advantage to using more bleach. In fact, too much bleach can be harmful because it’s not safe to consume. To create a sanitizing solution, use 1 tablespoon of unscented liquid bleach per gallon of water.

**Holiday Decorating Guidelines**

Decorating the workplace adds to the joy of the approaching holiday season. UC San Diego’s Fire Marshal reminds us that, regardless of their combustibility, no decorative materials are permitted in exit corridors and must not obstruct exit signs, fire alarms, extinguishers, sprinkler heads, or hose cabinets.

Decorative candles and open flames are prohibited in UCSD facilities with a few exceptions. Best locations for decorations are reception areas, lobbies, foyers, and break rooms. Think safety when you decorate. See “Holiday Decorating Guidelines” for UCSD facilities on Blink http://blink.ucsd.edu/go/decorating for details.

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Holiday Stress Busters

Adopt a Strategy for More Joy, Less Stress

Be realistic about what you can do. You can’t do it all, so don’t try. Take your time, especially when you’re in a hurry.

Don’t break the bank. Enjoy traditions that don’t cost extra: bake cookies, go caroling, volunteer at a favorite charity.

Delegate tasks among family members, then adjust your expectations. Everything doesn’t have to be perfect.

Exercise and get enough sleep—make it a priority. You’ll be in better shape to do what must be done.

Unwind before leaving work by saving your easiest, least-pressured tasks for the end of the day.

UC Driver Responsibilities

Only UCSD employees or specially approved individuals with a current, valid driver’s license are allowed to operate UC vehicles. “UC vehicles” include cars, trucks, vans, buses, electric carts, forklifts, and trailers that are owned, leased, or rented to conduct UC business.

If you operate a UC vehicle, use a personal vehicle for UC business, or supervise employees who do, attend Driving UC Vehicles and Electric Carts instructor-led training. You’ll learn the intricacies of driver and supervisor responsibilities, insurance, what to do if an accident occurs, and how an incident may affect your personal driving record and insurance. There’s a lot to know, some of it surprising.

Register for Driving UCSD Vehicles and Electric Carts on UC Learning Center at http://uclearning.ucsd.edu/.

Safety Training Tips

UC Learning Center

UC Learning Center (UCLC) has replaced Enrollment Central as Staff Education’s go-to training website.

UC Learning Center is on the web at http://uclearning.ucsd.edu

Single Sign-On

Before you can enter UC Learning Center, Single Sign-On will ask you to sign in.

On the Single Sign-On page:

- Faculty and staff, use the Business Systems (default) tab to sign in with your UCSD e-mail and Business Systems password.
- Students, use the Student Sign On tab to sign in with your UCSD Personal ID number (PID) and Personal Access Code (PAC).
- Affiliates, (for example, visiting scholars and graduate students registered at an educational institution outside the UC system) you must have your sponsoring department create an affiliate Single Sign-On account for you. Your departmental security administrator (DSA) can help you.

If you have problems with Single Sign-On, contact the ACT Help Desk: (858) 534-1853 or acthelp@ucsd.edu.

Find a class and enroll

- To find safety training classes on UCLC, use Browse Catalog to see Environment, Safety and Emergency Management titles, or use key words to Search for topics.
- To see a list of upcoming course dates, select a course title and click “Register”. Scroll down for future sessions.
- To sign up for a particular class, select the date and location that fits your schedule and click “Submit”.

Make sure you’re trained to safely perform your job. Learn more about UCSD safety training resources on Blink at http://blink.ucsd.edu/go/safetytraining.

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Apply the solution to the countertop, allow it to sit for a few minutes, then pat with clean, dry paper towels or allow to air dry. Store leftover sanitizing solution, tightly covered, for up to 1 week. After that, the bleach has lost its effectiveness.

Myth: The stand time recommended for microwaveable foods is optional; it’s just so you don’t burn yourself.

Fact: Stand time is not about cooling the microwaved food, but rather is an important part of the cooking process. Stand times are usually just a few minutes and the time is necessary to bring the food to a safe internal temperature as measured with a food thermometer. To ensure safety with microwave cooking, always read and follow package instructions, know your microwave’s wattage, and use a food thermometer to ensure food has reached a safe internal temperature.

Find more practical tips for dealing with everyday food challenges at www.foodsafety.gov.