

# Food Code Fact Sheet #13

What you should know about the Code

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FOODSAFETY

## OAR 333-150-0000, CHAPTER 4-302.12

(A) Food temperature measuring devices shall be provided and readily accessible for use in ensuring attainment and maintenance of food temperatures as specified under Chapter 3. <sup>Pf</sup>

(B) A temperature measuring device with a suitable small-diameter probe that is designed to measure the temperature of thin masses shall be provided and readily accessible to accurately measure the temperature in thin foods such as meat patties and fish filets. <sup>Pf</sup>

## PUBLIC HEALTH REASONS:

The presence and accessibility of food temperature measuring devices is critical to the effective monitoring of food temperatures. Proper use of such devices provides the operator or person in charge with important information with which to determine if temperatures should be adjusted or if foods should be discarded.

Bimetal, bayonet style thermometers are not suitable for accurately measuring the temperature of thin foods such as hamburger patties because of the large diameter of the probe and the inability to accurately sense the temperature at the tip of the probe. However, temperature measurements in thin foods can be accurately determined using a small-diameter probe 1.5 mm (0.059 inch), or less, connected to a device such as thermocouple thermometer.

## Probe Thermometers

In the new Oregon Food Sanitation Rules, restaurants serving thin foods such as hamburger patties, pork chops, chicken breasts and fish filets must have a small-diameter probe thermometer to check these foods.

An example of a small-diameter probe is a thermocouple, as shown in the top picture to the right.

Bi-metal thermometers (*as shown below*) are not designed to measure the temperatures of thin foods, and can only be used for foods like soups, roasts and tuna salad.



*There are many types of probe thermometers with small tips*

- Put the thermometer at least 2 inches into the ice slurry.
- After 30 seconds (or less) it should read 32F (0C).

If the thermometer is not reading 32F (0C), then adjust according to manufacturer's directions.

Dial thermometers have a nut on the back of the dial that can be adjusted until the dial reads 32F (0C).

Some thermocouples may need to be returned to the factory periodically for recalibration as well.

### Thermometer Care

Food thermometers should be cleaned between uses with individual alcohol wipes or cleaned with soapy water, rinsed and sanitized like you would with any food contact surface.

### Calibrating a Thermometer

Thermometers should be calibrated if they are dropped, seem inaccurate or at a frequency according to manufacturer's directions.

The most common method to check the accuracy of a food thermometer is using ice water:

- Pack a large cup to the top with crushed ice and water