



*City of Rowlett*  
*Environmental Health Services*

**Construction and Equipment  
Standards for Food Service Establishments**

Environmental Health Services is pleased to provide owners and operators with this comprehensive listing of structural standards for proposed food service establishments. The standards are provided for each food establishment and are not dependent upon the type of food products conveyed and the degree of preparation involved.

It is obvious that a food establishment is more likely to be maintained in a sanitary condition if the structure is properly designed, durable, and can be expeditiously cleaned. Additionally, in a properly designed establishment, food service sanitation inspections can focus on those more important items such as temperature control, food handling techniques, and general quality control rather than problems of deteriorated structures and equipment which are difficult to repair after the establishment is open for business. It is our hope that this listing of structural standards will result in a monetary savings by providing you with an establishment that can be easily and rapidly cleaned as well as durable, thereby minimizing maintenance requirements.

While we have made a concerted effort to provide the reader with as much detail as possible, we understand that questions may arise. If so, we ask that you do not hesitate to call the Environmental Services office at (972)-412-6125 Monday through Friday 8am-5pm. City of Rowlett Environmental Service staff will be most happy to discuss your proposed operation in detail.

We sincerely wish you the very best in your endeavor!

City of Rowlett  
Environmental Services  
3901 Main Street  
Rowlett, Texas 75088

**City of Rowlett Environmental Health Services  
Construction and Equipment Standards  
For Food Service Establishments**

**A. Floor Surface Requirements:**

1. Food preparation, tableware and utensils washing, wet bar, and service areas shall have quarry tile floors with epoxy-containing, acid-resistant grout. Floors shall have a covered floor-wall interface of four (4) inch height or greater, constructed of like material. Other floor surfaces may be used **if** considered equivalent and approved by the Health Department.
2. Dry storage rooms shall have sealed concrete, vinyl-composition (VCT) tile or equivalent floors approved by Environmental Health Services. Dry storage rooms may contain refrigerators or freezers not requiring drains to the sewer for condensate removal. *(If dry storage area is located in kitchen or dishwashing areas, floor shall be quarry tile or equivalent).*
3. Walk-in coolers shall have floor surfaces as follows:
  - a. Meat, dairy products, fish, poultry, and similar potentially hazardous foods: floor shall be quarry tile with epoxy grout with four (4) inch base or equivalent as approved by Environmental Health Services.
  - b. Produce, pre-packaged foods, and non-potentially hazardous foods: floor shall be sealed concrete or equivalent as approved by Environmental Health Services.
4. Walk-in freezers shall have sealed concrete floors or equivalent as approved by Environmental Health Services.
5. Toilet room floors shall be quarry tile, ceramic tile, or equivalent and shall have a minimum four (4) inch base cove of like material.

**B. Wall Surface Requirements:**

1. Food preparation, tableware and utensil washing, wet bar, and service area walls shall be fiberglass reinforced polyester (FRP) panels, ceramic tile, brick sealed with light-colored epoxy paint, or equivalent wall surfaces as approved by Environmental Health Services. The wall surfaces must be at **least eight (8) feet in height**. Wall surfaces above the paneling or tile shall be light colored, smooth and washable.

2. Walk-in cooler walls shall be smooth, easily cleanable and capable of withstanding effects of low temperature and moisture.
3. Toilet walls shall be FRP, ceramic tile, or brick sealed with epoxy paint to a minimum height of four (4) feet. Wall surfaces above the paneling or tile shall be light-colored, smooth and washable. Vinyl/paper wall covering are not allowed.
4. Dry storage room walls shall be taped and bedded drywall painted with light colored epoxy or enamel paint to eight (8) feet, or equivalent wall material as approved by Environmental Health Services. Floor-wall interface shall be four (4) inch vinyl base cove or other as approved by Environmental Health Services.

**C. Ceiling Surface Requirements:**

1. Ceilings in food preparation, food service, bar, dishwashing, toilet room, and dry storage areas shall be smooth, relatively non-absorbent, and easily cleanable. Materials shall be washable drop-in panels. Ceilings shall be vinyl coated sheetrock panels, taped and bedded sheetrock with light-colored epoxy or enamel paint, FRP panels, or equivalent as approved by the Health Department. **Fibrous acoustical drop-in panels shall be prohibited.**
2. Walk-in coolers and freezers shall have ceilings which are smooth, easily cleanable, and capable of withstanding effects of low temperature and moisture.

**D. Floor Drain Requirements:**

Floor drains shall be required in the following areas: toilet rooms, dishwash area(s), service area(s), bars and food preparation areas. Floor drains may be waived in existing food service establishments. Toilet floor drains shall be waived in establishments with existing foundations. Hub drains shall be installed adjacent to coolers and freezers requiring condensate removal.

**E. Sink Requirements:**

1. All establishments shall install a mop sink or curbed area with a floor drain for the cleaning of mops or similar wet floor cleaning tools and disposal of mop water.
2. Handwash lavatories shall be installed in food preparation and toilet room areas. An additional handwash sink shall be installed in service area(s) if direct access to the handwash sink in food preparation area is blocked by a wall or equipment or not conveniently located, every 25 feet, for service area

employee utilization. Handwash lavatories in food preparation areas shall be free-standing. Handwash lavatories must be equipped with **at least four (4) inch wing-style handles**. **Motion-sensing-type activated faucets are not approved anywhere in the facility.**

3. A free-standing stainless steel three-compartment sink (with basins large enough to allow immersion of the largest utensil) shall be installed.
4. A free-standing, stainless steel, four-compartment sink shall be installed in bar areas. This requirement may be modified if glassware is sanitized in a commercial dishwasher.
5. All produce, meat and seafood markets, fast food, and full service establishments shall install approved commercial food waste grinders.

**F. Waitress Stations:**

1. Waitress stations connected to food preparation or service areas, and/or used for food preparation, shall meet requirements listed for kitchen floors, walls, and ceilings. All equipment shall be non-corrosive metal with stainless steel food contact surfaces.
2. Waitress stations remote from food preparation or service areas and used for non-potentially hazardous beverage preparation only, shall meet the following requirements:
  - a. Vinyl composition tile floors or equivalent as approved by the Health Department (must be non-absorbent, easily cleanable, etc.).
  - b. Formica or equivalent countertops
  - c. Shelving below countertops shall be sealed, smooth, and easily cleanable.

**G. Vermin Control Requirements:**

Automatic insect control air curtains or equivalent devices as approved by the Health Department shall be installed on all take-out windows and receiving doors. *Self-closing take-out windows shall be exempt from automatic air curtain installation.* All holes cut in walls and ceilings for pipes or conduit shall be sealed, and door-floor clearance **shall not exceed one-quarter inch (1/4")**.

## **H. Equipment Specifications and Requirements**

1. All food contact surfaces shall be stainless steel with the exception of certain approved polymer cutting boards. Baking tables on which no potentially hazardous foods are prepared may be hard maple surfaces.
2. Cabinets, tables, or other similar equipment made of wood, particle board, or Formica shall not be allowed in food preparation, dishwashing, or other areas subject to moisture.
3. Customer service counters, food packaging areas, take-out windows, and similar areas shall be fully plastic laminated or equivalent material as approved by the Environmental Health Services. Back counters in food service areas separated by walls from food preparation and utensil wash areas may be plastic laminate covered wood products. Shelving under front customer service counters shall be sealed, smooth, and easily cleanable.
4. Shelving and racks in food preparation and dishwashing areas shall be commercial, food service grade, non-corrosive metal. Enamel or epoxy painted (light colored) wood shelving is acceptable in dry storage rooms and separate food service areas not subject to moisture.
5. Shelving and racks in walk-in coolers shall be stainless steel, epoxy coated, non-corrosive metal or equivalent as approved by Environmental Health Services. Wood is prohibited as a shelving material in walk-in coolers.
6. Shelving in bars shall be sealed, smooth, and easily cleanable.
7. All restroom doors shall have self-closing devices.
8. A commercial dishwasher with a final rinse temperature of 180° F or approved chlorine residual shall be installed in all full service food establishments utilizing re-useable utensils and dinnerware.
9. All equipment to be installed and used, including all small wares, etc., must be NEW. No used equipment is allowed.
10. All new equipment to be installed and used must be NSF-approved (National Sanitation Foundation) or its verifiable equivalent, and bear the stamp or seal of the certifying entity.

**I. Ventilation Requirements:**

1. Ventilation hoods with grease-intercepting filters shall be installed over grills, fryers, etc. and must have sufficient air velocity to capture all steam and grease emissions.
2. All toilet rooms shall have powered exhaust fans installed and operational.

**J. Lighting Requirements:**

1. All light fixtures in food preparation, dishwashing and food service areas shall be equipped with protective covers.
2. Light intensities shall be as follows:
  - a. Working surfaces in food preparation and service areas - 50 foot candles.
  - b. All other areas in food preparation, dishwashing, toilet rooms and service areas - 20 foot candles.
  - c. Dry storage and similar areas - 10 foot candles.

**K. Technical Specifications:**

1. There must be absolutely no exposed electrical conduit anywhere within the establishment. All electrical conduit and service must be installed to be concealed within the finished walls, and penetrate only at the point of connection to the equipment that it services.
2. Any new electrical panels must be installed to be flush with the finished wall, and not surface mounted on the wall, this condition applies to and includes any and all POS lines, Fire Alarm and Fire Extinguisher conduit installations.
3. Any penetration through the wall, floor, or ceiling at all plumbing water or waste lines must be sealed around the pipe first, and then the escutcheon sealed to the wall.
4. All painted surfaces must be absolutely, totally smooth, with absolutely NO surface texturing. This applies to any painted gypsum board ceilings in the Restrooms, as well as any painted gypsum board walls in any food handling, food storage, or warewashing areas.
5. Plans must include a separate, dedicated page showing the full food service equipment layout, with each piece of new and existing equipment shown on the plan, and referenced by number to a legend or schedule where each piece of equipment is described by name, make, and model.

## **Conditions For Issuance of Food Service Permit:**

Applicant must have completed all requirements specified in plan review process. Applicant must have obtained approvals from Building Inspection and all other appropriate city departments.

Applicant must have applied a Certificate of Occupancy from Building Inspection. Applicant must have completed application for Food Service Permit and paid necessary permit fees.

## **IMPORTANT NOTICE TO FOOD ESTABLISHMENT OWNERS & GENERAL CONTRACTORS**

The express purpose of providing these standards and conducting comprehensive plan reviews is to ensure that a newly constructed or remodeled restaurant, convenience store, grocery store, etc. is built in a manner consistent with The City of Rowlett Food Ordinance and Policies. Establishments **must** be constructed exactly as specified on approved plans. Any and all deviation from approved plans requires review by the Environmental Health Services. **Failure to gain approval of substitute materials and/or equipment may result in the delay of permit issuance or approval of the Certificate of Occupancy.**