



# COUNTY OF YOLO

Office of the County Administrator

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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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## Yolo County's Placard System Enhances Food Safety and Public Health

**(Woodland, CA)** – The Yolo County Department of Community Services' Environmental Health Division held its inaugural Food Safety Forum on June 10, which was attended by dozens of food industry stakeholders, academics, non-profit organizations, and residents. The Forum provided updates on how the Environmental Health Division, in collaboration with its partners, is working to protect and enhance residents' quality of life by identifying, assessing, mitigating, and preventing environmental hazards.

To protect residents, Yolo County implemented a placard system in July 2017. This system, praised by residents and business owners alike for its simplicity and effectiveness at the recent forum, uses different colors to make safety inspection results easily identifiable and to highlight an establishment's level of accountability for patrons' wellbeing. The placards are posted in clear view of patrons entering a food facility. Inspection reports are accessible online at [www.YoloCounty.org/InspectionReports](http://www.YoloCounty.org/InspectionReports) or by scanning a QR code on the placards.

The color-coded placarding system communicates inspection results as follows:

**Green (PASS)** – No more than one major violation observed, which is mitigated or corrected during the inspection.

**Yellow (CONDITIONAL PASS)** – Two or more major violations observed and mitigated or corrected during the inspection, but inspectors will return for a follow-up.

**Red (CLOSED)** – Any major violation posing an imminent health hazard that cannot be mitigated or corrected during the inspection.

"Implementing a food placarding system ensures consistency and serves as an effective communication tool to inform the public about all food facilities in Yolo County," said Michelle Bilodeau, Environmental Health Program Coordinator. "This initiative empowers residents to make informed decisions and feel confident about the safety of their food choices."

These placards indicate the number of critical risk factor violations a food facility receives during health inspections. There are five major risk factors related to food safety practices within the retail food industry that contribute to foodborne illnesses:

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- **Hygiene** – Not washing hands or working while sick.
- **Food Temperatures** – Hot foods must be 135 degrees Fahrenheit or above, and cold foods must be held at 41 degrees Fahrenheit or less.
- **Inadequate Cooking** – Undercooked foods.
- **Contamination** – Washing and sanitizing utensils and food contact surfaces.
- **Unapproved Food Sources** – Foods made in home and/or unpermitted kitchens.

There are a handful of retail food facility permit types that do not receive a color-coded placard. Cottage food operators (CFOs), who are allowed to make some non-perishable baked goods like cookies in a home kitchen, do not receive a placard. Similarly, food booths at temporary events do not receive color-coded placards at this time. However, all permitted retail food facilities receive a paper permit, which consumers can always ask to see. The permit to operate should be posted in a visible area for consumer assurance. Knowing that a facility is permitted provides peace of mind, as it signifies that the establishment has undergone thorough inspection and complies with health and safety regulations. This permit underscores the hard work and diligence of our inspection team in ensuring food safety and protecting public health.

For more information, contact the Environmental Health Division at (530) 666-8646 or visit the Environmental Health Division's webpage at [www.YoloCounty.org/EnvironmentalHealth](http://www.YoloCounty.org/EnvironmentalHealth).

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