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Prevention, Roles, and Receiving

Integrated pest management joins prevention, inspection, appropriate control, and follow-up. The FDA Food Code 2026 is a model, not automatically local law. Routine inspection covers incoming food AND supplies and the premises; the Code does not set a universal pest-count trigger or inspection interval.

Recognize	Understand and apply
People	The person in charge (PIC) coordinates protection, repairs, and follow-up; employees check and report. This division is restaurant practice, not a contractor-only rule. Verify qualifications for the work. Checking references is optional practice, not proof of authorization.
Receiving	Inspect food packages and nonfood cartons before normal storage. Food packaging must protect its contents. Keep suspect materials apart from accepted stock while the manager resolves the delivery; do not carry affected cartons through clean storage.
Evidence	Live or dead insects, possible egg cases or shed material, gnawing, tracks, and suspected droppings are investigation cues, not reliable proof of a species or the age of activity. Report what was observed, where, when, and what was affected.

A useful receiving report
A cup carton contains moving insects. The receiver isolates it, reports the location and finding, and checks nearby cartons. The manager resolves the delivery and investigates the receiving area without waiting for a species name.

Remember: A contractor's visit does not replace the restaurant's prevention and inspection work.

Memory cues and recall practice: page 8.

2026 Food Code: 3-202.15; 6-501.111; 7-202.12; Annex 3, 6-501.111

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Protect the Building Boundary

Normally, close holes and gaps, use closed tight-fitting windows, and use solid, self-closing, tight-fitting exterior doors. Check the actual result of a repair, including whether the door closes tightly during normal operation.

Recognize	Understand and apply
Open ventilation	When openings remain open, listed protection includes 16 mesh per 1 inch, properly designed and installed air curtains for flying insects, or other effective means. This also covers specified temporary-establishment openings. An air curtain does not seal a separate rodent gap.
Larger building	An inner opening into a larger building or attached structure may qualify for the exception when that building's outer openings are protected. A mall address alone does not establish protection.
Emergency door	The self-closing exception requires a solid, tight-fitting door, emergency-only designation by the fire authority with jurisdiction, and use only for emergencies. Routine trash or delivery use defeats that condition.
Pest absence	The open-opening protection requirement does not apply when flying insects and other pests are absent because of location, weather, or another limiting condition. Reassess if conditions change.

Match the control to the route
An air curtain protects a service opening from flying insects, but a damaged sweep at the receiving door still needs correction. Adding a trap beside that gap does not repair the boundary.

Remember: Exceptions have conditions. Check the actual building, use, and pest conditions before relying on one.

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Remove Attractants and Harborage

Pest prevention removes food, water, and shelter. Clean residues, protect food, repair leaks, and remove unnecessary items. Recheck during operation.

Recognize	Understand and apply
Food and water	Clean behind equipment, fix leaking containers and plumbing, and recheck during use. After use, position mops to air-dry without soiling walls, equipment, or supplies.
Shelter	Remove unnecessary equipment and clutter. Keep supplies and tools accessible for cleaning without contamination. As stock-rotation practice, bring older stock forward so it remains accessible for inspection.
Waste containment	Keep outdoor receptacles covered with tight-fitting lids or doors and keep drain plugs in place. Indoors, cover food-residue containers when not in continuous use; cover all receptacles once filled. Keep areas and receptacles clean.
Waste removal	Remove waste often enough to minimize odors and pest attraction or harborage. Non-rodent-resistant bags and food-contaminated packaging cannot simply be stored outside. Clean, residue-free cardboard or packaging may await regularly scheduled pickup outside if it creates no harborage.

The schedule is not the result
Waste attracts pests before its scheduled pickup. Reassess containment, cleaning, and removal timing. Following a written once-daily schedule does not establish that the required outcome was achieved.

Remember: Control the source of a recurring condition and then inspect the result.

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Products, People, and Storage

EPA means U.S. Environmental Protection Agency. A pesticide registration number does not authorize every restaurant use. Check label permission for a food establishment, the actual site and method, applicable law, required certification conditions, and any additional regulatory conditions.

Recognize	Understand and apply
Authorization	Restricted-use pesticides require a certified applicator or a person under that applicator's direct supervision, subject to applicable conditions. Other products still have legal and label requirements. Verify jurisdiction-specific commercial qualifications; food-manager certification is not applicator certification.
Storage	Separate operational pesticides by spacing or partitioning AND locate them where they are not above food, equipment, utensils, linens, or single-service/use articles. Follow additional label or legal security conditions. Keep only necessary operational toxic materials, apart from packaged retail-sale stock.
Labels and containers	Keep manufacturer labels legible. Permitted working containers need the common name, but this does not authorize a transfer prohibited by label or law. Never repurpose a former toxic-material container for food or food-service articles, even after washing.

Permission must match the work
A product labeled for exterior use is not used in the kitchen simply because it targets the same insect. Verify the proposed use and the person's authority before scheduling it.

Remember: Product, location, method, person, and protection all need to fit the applicable requirements.

Before and After Treatment

Coordinate treatment with the qualified applicator. There is no universal restaurant waiting time or closing-hour rule that replaces the product label and applicable legal conditions. People must be protected, and contamination of food and clean articles must be prevented.

Recognize	Understand and apply
Before	Confirm the permitted use and access restrictions. Remove items, use impermeable covers, or take other appropriate preventive action. Protect food, equipment, utensils, linens, and single-service/use articles from toxic residues, drip, fog, splash, or spray.
After	Meet label and legal reentry conditions. Clean and sanitize equipment and utensils after application. Resolve affected food before releasing it. Dry surfaces or lack of odor do not establish readiness.
Handoff	As restaurant practice, assign preparation and restoration tasks before treatment. Confirm completion and communicate remaining restrictions before returning the area to service.

Two different releases
The label's reentry conditions are satisfied, so authorized staff enter. They complete required equipment and utensil cleaning and sanitizing and verify the area before food operations resume. Permission to enter is not permission to skip restoration.

Remember: Prevention of exposure, safe reentry, equipment restoration, and food disposition are separate checks.

Bait, Powders, Devices, and Removal

Device selection and placement must control pests without creating contamination. Follow the product label and lawful application requirements in addition to each device-specific rule.

Recognize	Understand and apply
Rodent bait	Contain bait in covered, tamper-resistant stations. A locked room or a loose lid is not the station requirement. This bait rule does not make every mechanical trap a bait station.
Tracking powder	Tracking powder pesticides may not be used in a food establishment. Nontoxic tracking powder, if used, must not contaminate food, equipment, utensils, linens, or single-service/use articles. Nontoxic is not permission to contaminate.
Insect devices	Electrocution or stunning devices must retain insects. Insect-control devices cannot be above food preparation or allow insects or fragments to reach exposed food, clean equipment, utensils, linens, or unwrapped single-service/use articles.
Removal and restoration	Remove dead/trapped pests from devices and premises before accumulation, decomposition, or attraction occurs. Restore affected surfaces appropriately. Code disinfection applies when pathogens of concern are not controlled by available sanitizers; follow EPA-registered label directions and food-contact rinsing unless the label specifies otherwise.

Check more than the tray
A retaining device above a preparation table still fails the placement rule. Its replacement location must also prevent fragments from reaching nearby clean articles.

Remember: Match the rule to the material or device; a favorable feature does not cancel another required condition.

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Food Protection and Follow-Through

Keep suspect food out of use while its disposition is resolved. Unsafe or adulterated food must be discarded or reconditioned under an approved procedure. Approval means acceptance by the regulatory authority, not the manager's personal judgment.

Recognize	Understand and apply
Affected stock	Without an approved reconditioning procedure, discard contaminated food. Do not improvise brushing, sifting, or reheating as salvage. Inspect adjacent stock; do not assume every item was exposed simply because it is nearby.
Escalation	If an imminent health hazard may exist, cease affected operations and immediately notify the regulatory authority. Unaffected areas need not discontinue operation. Obtain regulatory approval before resuming operations discontinued under that provision; a contractor's service completion does not supply it.
Useful records	As practice, record evidence, location, time, food disposition, treatment information, repairs, restrictions, responsible people, and follow-up results. These provisions do not prescribe a universal pest-log form or retention period.
Meaningful verification	Check that repairs work and activity does not recur under comparable observations. Fewer captures after removing traps do not prove improvement. Carry unfinished actions into the next shift.

Close the loop
A manager records affected food disposition, confirms that the repaired door closes tightly, and rechecks the same monitoring locations. The record distinguishes what was done from what the follow-up actually showed.

Remember: Prevent entry and support, inspect food and supplies, control safely, restore the area, and verify the result.

2026 Food Code: 1-201.10 (Approved; Imminent Health Hazard); 3-701.11(A); 6-501.111-.112; 7-202.12; 8-404.11-.12; Annex 4

CHAPTER 13 | REMEMBER THE DIFFERENCE

Pest Control Is More Than Treatment

Keep out. Remove food, water and shelter. Inspect and act.

This is an original recall cue for integrated pest management, not a mandated checklist format. A contractor visit does not replace the restaurant's prevention work.

Route vs. evidence	A damaged door sweep is an entry route. Droppings, gnawing or moving insects are evidence to investigate. Report observed facts without guessing species or age from appearance alone.
Food / water / shelter	Clean residues, fix leaks, protect waste and remove harborage. Traps do not repair a gap or stop a leaking pipe. A scheduled trash pickup is insufficient if waste already attracts pests.
Permission vs. product name	Use must fit the label, site, method and law. Restricted-use pesticides require a certified applicator or a person under direct supervision under applicable conditions. A food-manager certificate is not pesticide authorization.
Bait / insect device	Rodent bait: covered, tamper-resistant stations. Insect devices: retain insects and prevent fragments reaching food or clean items; not above food preparation. A good collecting tray does not excuse unsafe placement.

Use it on shift: Treatment is finished and the label's reentry conditions are met. Staff may still need to restore equipment and utensils and resolve affected food before service. Permission to enter is not the same as permission to serve.

Cover the answers. Explain the reason.

Can a trap replace a door repair? No. Control the entry route as well as the activity.

Does no chemical smell prove readiness? No. Follow label/legal reentry conditions and required restoration; odor is not the test.

Review: earlier guide pp. 1-6. **Sources:** 6-202.13/.15; 6-501.111-.114; 7-202.12; 7-206.11-.13; 3-701.11. Assignment and inspection routines are implementation methods.
FDA Food Code 2026