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Issue: Can a non-commercial dish machine be used for sanitizing?

Discussion: Manufacturers of dish washing machines used in the home have recently introduced new models which they claim can achieve temperatures capable of sanitizing dishes. Technically, these new machines meet NSF protocol P153, but in the past that was not the equivalent to NSF Standard 3, which is applied to commercial dish machines. DHFS has requested clarity from NSF regarding the newer machines. The response:

The testing requirements for Hot Water Sanitization dish machines is the same between Standard 3 and Protocol P153. In both cases the machine must deliver 3600 heat unit equivalents. However, Standard 3 has an additional requirement that the sanitizing rinse temperature cannot drop below 165 or 180 (depending on the type of machine). This requirement is in Standard 3 to comply with the Food Code. Protocol P153 does not have any minimum sanitizing rinse temperature requirement.

Sanitization depends on time and temperature. In general, the machines certified to P153 reach sanitization at a lower temperature, but take more time than commercial dish machines certified to Standard 3.

It is important to note that machines certified to P153 typically can be operated in several different modes. The mode of operation under which these machines must usually be run in order to pass is sometimes referred to as the "sani-rinse" mode. Please refer to the manufacturers instructions. Operation in any other mode may not result in sanitization.

Interpretation:

Since the codes regarding equipment in B&B operations do not require commercial equipment, the Department had previously allowed home-style dish machines as long as a separate sanitizing step was performed. Now, NSF is certifying that home-style machines that meet Protocol P153, when operated in the proper mode, are capable of meeting the same sanitizing standards as commercial grade machines. Accordingly, these machines may henceforth be used in B&B operations. However, the operator must purchase heat sensitive tape and test the performance of the machine periodically. No additional hand sanitizing process will be required.

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