

How to?

15) Cleaning and maintaining an ice machine

Why is this important?

Keeping an ice machine clean and hygienic is essential; most food poisoning organisms do not readily grow in conditions below 8°C, though some bacteria may multiply in these cold conditions and may survive whilst in strong alcoholic drinks.

Water supply - The ice machine should be connected to a 'direct' wholesome water supply i.e. not a storage tank, and must meet drinking water standards.

Machine location - The machine should be sited in an area that is free from dirt and dust, preferably off the ground and away from sources of heat.

Machine cleaning - The ice storage compartment should be cleaned regularly, to prevent the build up of bacteria. It should be monitored for any growth of scum or slime and it should be cleaned immediately should this develop.

Ice which has been removed from the machine for cleaning should be disposed of.

Cleaning

Hands should be washed regularly by the person serving the ice.

Ice should always be removed using a scoop – do not use hands to do this. Glass should not be used due to risk of physical contamination. The scoop and the container should be stored in a clean place, and the scoop stored in a sanitizer solution which should be changed regularly.

The ice compartment should not be used for the storage of bottles of beer, cans of soft drinks, cartons of milk or any other items.

Ice buckets and serving utensils must be regularly cleaned and sanitised.

All ice left in the machine at the end of service should be disposed off and not returned to the machine.

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Check your understanding by:

Why is it essential to keep an ice machine clean?

Why should glass implements not be used for removing ice from the machine?

Should ice be used again after the end of a shift? i.e. placed back into the machine once it has been out in the bar area?

Would it be suitable for a water storage tank to be used as a water supply for the machine?

You can tell it's correct if:

The ice machine is cleaned regularly and is well maintained.

No glass equipment is used for dispensing ice.

The person working on the bar regularly washes their hands to ensure cleanliness and personal hygiene.

Adequate maintenance of the ice machine is carried out – this should be carried out twice a year.

Hints and tips:

Regularly clean or change ice serving implements. This will ensure hygiene as well as giving an impression of cleanliness for customers looking on.