



HEALTH CARE AGENCY/PUBLIC HEALTH ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH ***FRAUDULENT ACTIVITY ALERT***

TO: Orange County Retail Food Facility Operators

SUBJECT: Recognition and Verification of Environmental Health Specialists

Food facility operators have expressed concern over the possibility of individuals impersonating an Environmental Health Specialist and unlawfully entering their facility. These individuals are requesting to schedule an inspection of the premise, requesting detailed business and personal information from the owner/operator, and are requesting a call back to confirm the personal information through the use of a unique code number. There have also been reports throughout the country of imposters extorting money from food facility operators. The purpose of this informational bulletin is to make you aware of your rights as a retail food facility operator as well as to instruct you how to recognize a legitimate Environmental Health Specialist.

As stated in the California Retail Food Code section 114390(C):

“An employee may refuse entry to an enforcement officer who is unable to present official identification showing the enforcement officer’s picture and enforcement agency name. In the absence of the identification card, a business card showing the enforcement agency’s name plus a picture identification card such as a driver’s license shall meet this requirement.”

An Environmental Health Specialist from Orange County Environmental Health should have with them at all times a valid ID and/or business card.

If you are approached by someone claiming to be an Environmental Health Specialist and you feel that they may not be an employee of Orange County Environmental Health, take the following steps to ensure that they are not an imposter:

- Ask for a valid photo ID and/or business card that shows that they work for the County of Orange
- Contact Environmental Health to verify that they are a current employee (714) 433 – 6000
- If the individual is not able to provide valid photo ID and/or a business card and Environmental Health cannot confirm that they are a current employee, **contact the local law enforcement agency**

The impersonation of a public officer is a criminal offense. Anyone found impersonating a health inspector or any government employee is guilty of a felony crime.

Under no circumstances should a food facility operator ever give money to an Environmental Health employee outside of a County of Orange facility. All fees are collected either through billing or collected at the Environmental Health Office. If an Environmental Health Specialist ever demands cash on site during an inspection, immediately become suspicious and contact Environmental Health.

If you have any further questions regarding identification of Environmental Health Specialists or retail food facility enforcement contact this agency at (714) 433-6000.