

## **Food Operator Alert**

June 25, 2010

A number of restaurants in Marin County have recently received telephone calls or visits from people who claim they are: "health inspectors"; "from the Health Department"; "from Environmental Health". These people have asked for various things including: a food quality review; a special inspection requiring payment of a fee; an inspection. Many other Environmental Health agencies throughout California are experiencing similar fraudulent phone calls and visits.

Food facilities owners/operators must be aware of these scams and protect themselves by understanding:

- Marin County Environmental Health Services (EHS) inspectors do not call to schedule an inspection in advance unless it is initiated by the owner or operator. Inspections are usually conducted "unannounced".
- It is not necessary to follow a procedure to participate in a "code" process and give personal or business information.
- Never give out personal or business identification information over the telephone unless you are initiating the process.
- If you do not recognize your inspector, please ask for proper photo identification and a business card.
- Do not pay any fees "on the spot". EHS will send an invoice for any fees that may be due.
- EHS inspectors will write an inspection report and leave a copy with the owner/operator when an inspection has been conducted.
- You can call the EHS office at (415) 499-6907 during regular office hours and verify the person is an employee of Marin County Environmental Health Services.