



DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Jan. 23, 2015

15-005

HAWAII DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH CITES 3 W RESTAURANT GROUP FOR UNLAWFUL PLACARD REMOVAL AND FOOD CODE VIOLATIONS

HONOLULU – The Hawaii State Department of Health (DOH) has issued a Notice of Violation and Order against 3 W Restaurant Group LLC d.b.a. Ichiben for \$8,000 for intentionally removing the posted yellow “CONDITIONAL PASS” placard from its facility and for food safety violations cited during the health inspection resulting in the issuance of the yellow placard. Ichiben is located in Waimalu at 98-1258 Kaahumanu St., Unit #106. The company may request a hearing to contest the notice.

“With more than 2,000 inspections completed since the start of the new placarding system, we’ve seen excellent compliance with the food industry; this is only the second incident involving intentional removal of a placard,” said Peter Oshiro, Environmental Health program manager. “The program is a huge success and after completing the most challenging inspections involving eating places in the higher-risk category, we are well on track to complete the inspections for all licensed food establishments this year.”

A food establishment may face fines of \$2,000 per day for removing an inspection placard posted by DOH and \$1,000 per day for each critical violation that led to the facility receiving a yellow placard. Placard removal is a serious violation because this act intentionally places profit above health and safety and compromises the public’s trust and their right to know when violations occur during an inspection.

On Dec. 26, 2014, DOH conducted a routine inspection at Ichiben and issued a yellow placard for five major food code violations. A yellow placard is issued if there are two or more major violations observed during an inspection. Major violations are those conditions known to cause foodborne illnesses as recognized by the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and the Food and Drug Administration (FDA). Ichiben was cited for having an inaccessible hand wash sink, improper mechanical and manual sanitizing of dishes, improper food temperature violations, and cross-contamination of in-use utensils by employees handling raw poultry.

On Dec. 29, the DOH inspector that issued and posted the yellow placard at the entrance of the facility observed that the placard was not posted. The placard was displayed the morning of Dec. 30 when the inspector arrived to do a follow-up inspection. Only authorized DOH agents may post or remove a color-coded placard indicating the compliance status of a food establishment.

During the follow-up inspection on Dec. 30, Ichiben was found to have corrected four of the five major violations cited on Dec. 26. One outstanding major violation was corrected on site at the time of the inspection. A green placard is currently posted at the facility as all major violations have been corrected.

The restaurant placarding system began on Oahu in June 2014 and since its establishment nearly 1,600 restaurants have received a green pass placard and nearly 600 have received a yellow conditional pass placard. The program continues to grow as more food establishments complete their health inspections under the state's new food safety rules. DOH is requesting proposals for an expanded computerized system to build on the electronic inspection records database established last year. The new system is expected to provide real-time public access to restaurant inspection reports.

For more information on the department's new restaurant placarding program go to

<http://health.hawaii.gov/san/>

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