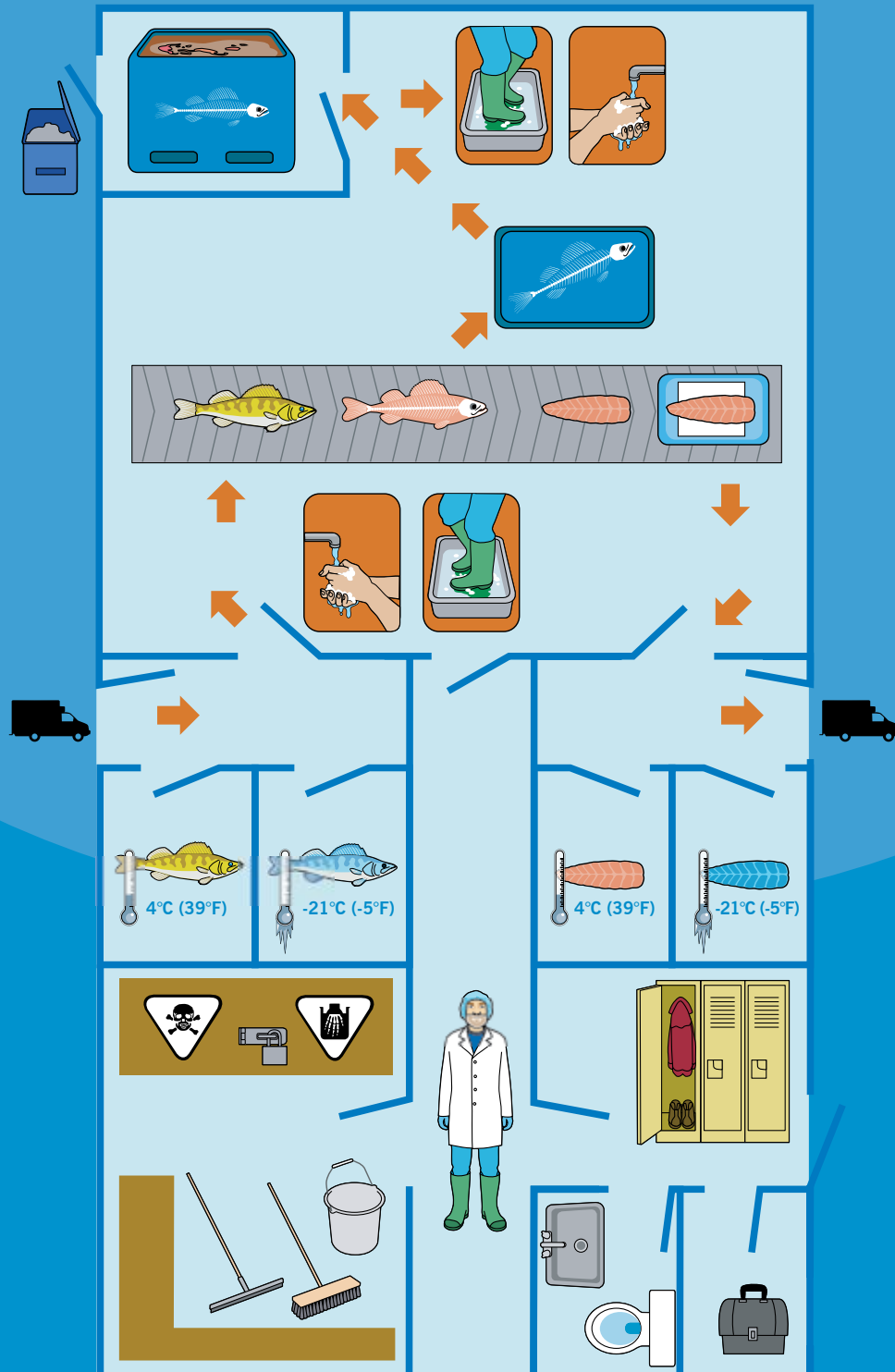


Protecting your Products with Safe Food Handling Practices



Once fish come into your building, it is important that they do not become contaminated before they are ready for sale to your customers. Think about all the ways fish are handled as they are processed, how they are stored and what happens as they are being processed. Then follow the safe food handling guidelines below.

There are many ways you can make sure fish do not become contaminated. You can wash your hands often, store fish at the right temperature and keep cleaning supplies away from areas where fish is handled or stored.

Everyone who works at or visits your fish processing plant should follow these guidelines.

Don't Go Into The Danger Zone!

The Danger Zone is between 4°C and 60°C (39°F to 140°F).

Fish should not be stored between these temperatures because they may become unsafe to eat.

Points to Remember:

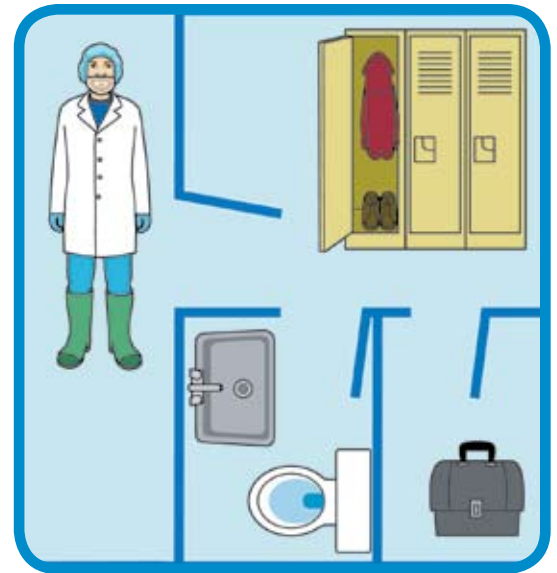
- Who is responsible for keeping fish and fish products safe
- The temperature that raw fish must be kept
- Why it is important to keep the work area clean

Getting Ready For Work

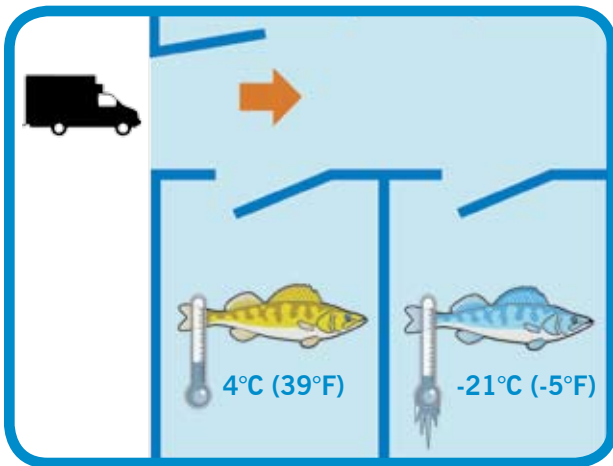
Your workplace should have a separate area where you can keep your street clothes, shoes and other belongings after you change into your work clothes.

The washroom should also be separate from the work area. You should change out of your work clothes before entering the washroom. You must **always** wash your hands after using the toilet.

Your workplace should also have a separate area where you can safely store and eat the food and drink you bring in from outside. You must **always** wash your hands before and after eating.



Keep Away from the Danger Zone Temperatures



Frozen fish must be kept frozen and stored at a temperature of -21°C (-5°F). All other fish or fish products must be kept cold and stored at a temperature 4°C (39°F) or below.

Refrigerators and freezers should have thermometers that you can check to make sure they are running at the right temperature. You should check the temperatures at least once a day and write them down in a logbook.

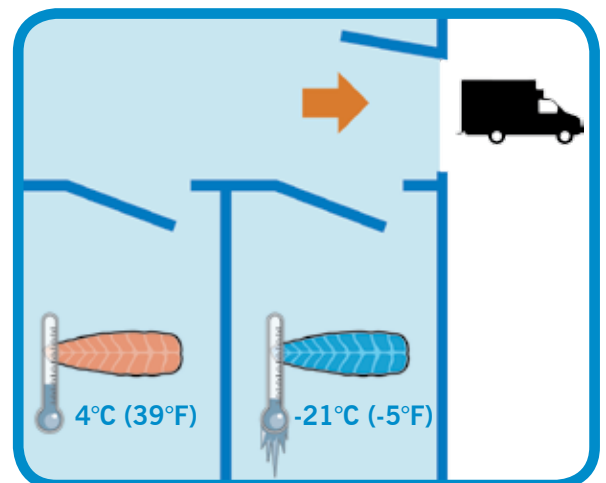
Ice that is used to help keep fish cold should be made from clean water that is safe to drink. Storage containers, refrigerators and freezers should be cleaned and sanitized often.

Keep Raw Fish Separate from Processed

Processed and ready-to-eat fish products should be kept separate from raw fish products. These products should also be kept refrigerated or frozen while they are waiting to be shipped out.

Frozen fish must be kept frozen and stored at a temperature of -21°C (-5°F). All other fish or fish products must be kept cold and stored at a temperature below 4°C (39°F).

Refrigerators and freezers should have thermometers that you can check to make sure they are running at the right temperature. You should check the temperatures at least once a day and write them down in a logbook.





Wash your hands with soap or replace/wash your gloves when you:

- Use the washroom
- Eat, drink or smoke
- Cough, sneeze or blow your nose
- Touch bare skin
- Enter or leave the work area
- Change tasks between raw and ready-to-eat products
- Handle soiled equipment
- Pick up something off the floor
- Handle garbage, offal or other waste products

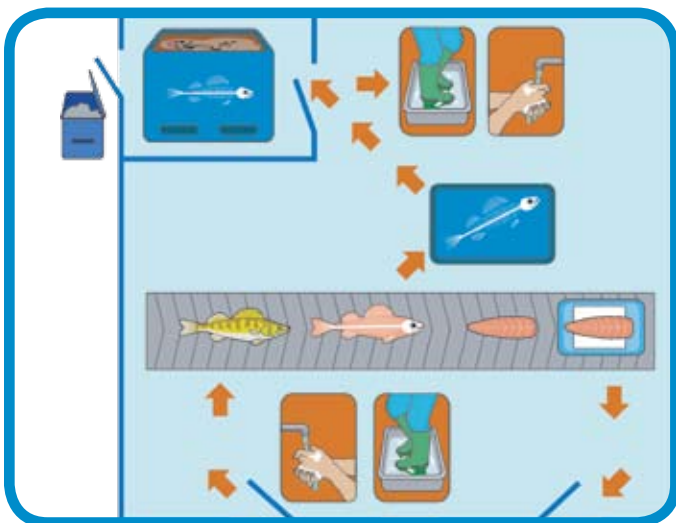
Washing Your Hands and Boots

Washing your hands and boots often is one of the most important things you can do to keep fish and fish products safe.

Even if your workplace is one room, you need to wash your hands and boots when you move from an area where one job is being done to an area where a different job is being done.

You also wash your hands and boots every time you:

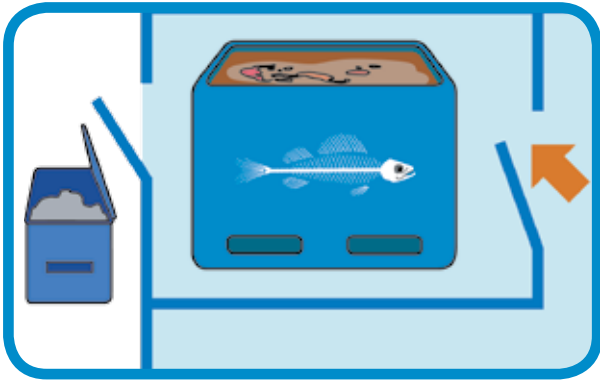
- come in from outside
- enter a new work area
- after throwing away garbage or offal
- move between raw, processed and ready-to-eat areas (imagine a door between these areas!)



Remember to scrub your hands with soap for at least 20 seconds to remove all harmful germs. A good way to know how long you should wash your hands is to sing the “Happy Birthday” song in your head twice.

Just because you have removed the dirt from your hands doesn’t mean that they are clean. Bacteria are tiny and can’t always be seen, so you have to make sure to wash your hands very well.

If you have a hand sanitizer, use that after washing, too. Using a sanitizer alone will not clean your hands well enough to remove all the bacteria and germs.



Removing Waste

Waste should be stored in a separate area. You should be able to get into the waste storage area through a door on the inside and a door on the outside.



You must *always* wash your hands and/or replace your gloves after handling waste.



You must *always* wash your boots after leaving the waste area.

Remember...

There are many steps a fish must go through before it is a processed or ready-to-eat product. Here are a few things to remember in the processing area:

- **Keep each step separate.** To avoid the spread of harmful bacteria, the fish need to be kept separate as they go through each processing step. Think of a big red line between each different task. If you need to cross the line, you must wash your hands and boots.
- **Clean as you go.** It doesn't take long for slime, offal and bacteria to build up on the equipment, table and floor in your work area. By cleaning everything between steps, you'll make sure bacteria are not spread.
- **Be careful with cleaning products.** Many cleaners have harmful chemicals that could contaminate the fish and its packaging, making it unsafe to eat. Make sure the fish has been removed to a separate area before starting to clean. Even the mist from water you're spraying could carry bacteria and make the fish unsafe to eat. Keep fish and cleaning products separate at all times.
- **Keep fish cold.** Fish products can go bad very quickly if they are kept at a temperature in the Danger Zone: 4°C to 60°C (39°F to 140°F). When you take fish out of the refrigerator or freezer, process it right away to make sure it stays a high-quality product.



What is contamination?

Food that is contaminated is not safe to eat.

Food can become contaminated when harmful bacteria or chemicals move from:

- people or equipment onto food, or
- from one food to another

This guidebook is available online in several languages.

For more information contact:

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