

HB 378

Sponsor Statement

[HB 378](#) amends provisions in [Title 17](#) relating to the powers of the Commissioner of the Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC) relating to food offered or sold to the public. The bill makes it possible for DEC to require food-handling operators to become trained and certified and assess fines. Both of these capacities are needed as part of the new food safety paradigm - Active Managerial Control. In addition, the bill defines a violation of labeling or advertising as a violation of the unfair trade and consumer protection provisions.

Currently, [AS 17.20.005](#) allows the Commissioner of DEC to issue orders, regulations, permits, embargoes, and quarantines. This includes inspection, sanitation standards, food handling methods, and labeling. Under this bill, the Commissioner of DEC will have additional authority to ensure knowledge of food safety and sanitation by individuals who handle or prepare food for the public, and persons who supervise or employ those individuals. This bill also authorizes DEC to impose a civil fine for a violation of the Alaska Food, Drug, and Cosmetic Act.

HB 378 also clarifies that a violation of the label or advertisement provisions in AS 17.20, or a violation of the representation requirement in [AS 17.06](#) is an unfair or deceptive trade practice under Alaska's Statutes. This will allow the Attorney General's office to investigate labeling violations that are not food safety or sanitation concerns.