

# Chicken & Rice Guys cited for previous health violations

E-MAIL FACEBOOK TWITTER GOOGLE LINKEDIN

15



GLOBE FILE /2016

**Chicken & Rice Guys has several restaurants, including one in Medford.**

By [Megan Woolhouse](#) and [Matt Rocheleau](#)

GLOBE STAFF APRIL 21, 2017

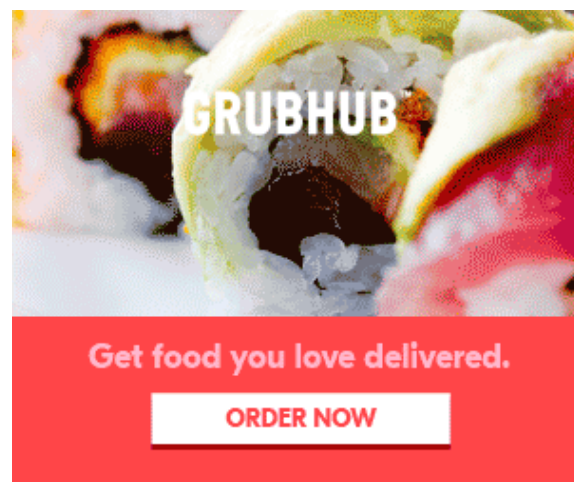
The food trucks and restaurants operated by the Chicken & Rice Guys remained closed for a ninth day Thursday as investigators searched for the cause of an E. coli outbreak there, but a review of health

department records shows the shutdown is not the first time the chain has faced serious public safety concerns.

City officials suspended operation of one of the company's food trucks in 2015 due to unsanitary conditions, and there was evidence of significant health problems on trucks and at one restaurant dating back to 2012.

In March 2015, an unannounced inspection of one of the company's food trucks in Boston found the truck's water tank was empty. It appeared that employees were not washing their hands, and the person in charge of the truck failed to monitor cleaning or sanitizing on board.

In all, there were 15 separate health and safety violations found during the truck's inspection, including four serious violations that led inspectors to immediately close the truck for business.



### Get Talking Points in your inbox:

An afternoon recap of the day's most important business news, delivered weekdays.

Sign Up

Ian So, the chief executive of the Chicken & Rice Guys, said in an interview that he did not recall that shutdown and declined to comment further.

After correcting the problems, the Chicken & Rice Guys brought the truck back for reinspection about three weeks later, but inspectors found several new and serious violations that the company fixed before the truck was allowed to begin serving food again.

The findings contradict comments made last week by William Christopher, the city's commissioner of Inspectional Services, who said there were no prior suspensions or major violations at any of the Boston trucks or at the chain's three brick-and-mortar locations in Boston.

City inspectors also found several other violations over the last five years on at least one of the trucks and in one of the restaurants. Food on the truck was stored at the wrong temperatures, including chicken and mayonnaise-based sauces that were left too warm. Also, a worker was seen pulling hair back with his or her hands and then putting on gloves without washing the hands in front of an inspector.



A separate violation at the restaurant's 85 Bedford St. location cited the facility for having a too-low sneeze guard at its front counter, a violation city officials said could lead to cross contamination.

This week, Christopher said the previous events had no bearing on the current suspension because the problems took place two years ago.

"I do not see a connection with the events that took place recently," he said, referring to the E. coli contamination.

The city has not yet determined what caused the recent E. coli outbreak.

City and state health investigators say they are awaiting the results of specimens taken from the company's food as well as its 100 employees, in hopes of finding a cause.

The entire business was shut down on April 11, when health officials matched a strain of Shiga toxin-producing Escherichia coli 0157:H7, the most common type of E. coli infection in the United States. This type of E. coli bacteria causes stomach cramps, diarrhea, vomiting, and in some cases fatal kidney failure.

The city has said that 15 people were sickened, 10 of whom were hospitalized. No further details about their conditions have been available.

Dr. Kyle Staller, a physician with the Massachusetts General Hospital's Gastroenterology Associates, said the majority of E. coli outbreaks in the United States stem from undercooked meat.

There are, however, outbreaks that occur when people ingest unwashed vegetables contaminated with

animal fecal matter carrying E. coli bacteria. More unusual, he said, is person-to-person transmission, which can occur if a person infected with E. coli does not wash their hands and spreads the bacteria.



WENDY MAEDA/GLOBE STAFF

**Food trucks from Chicken & Rice Guys have been common around the Boston area.**

Staller said the lack of hand-washing that led to the Chicken & Rice Guys 2015 food truck suspension could be important because it may indicate lax practices when it comes to washing produce or employee hand-washing.

“You certainly have a recipe for potential transmission,” Staller said of the past violations. “It’s an important part of the story.”

Bob Luz, president of the Massachusetts Restaurant Association, said E. coli outbreaks can be devastating for a business, even if the exact cause of the outbreak is never identified. That happens in

“a fair amount of cases,” he said.

“Unfortunately, the one left carrying the burden of that is the name on the restaurant,” Luz said.

“Look what Chipotle had to dig themselves out of.”

In 2015, Chipotle customers in nine states were sickened with E. coli. In a separate incident, about 140 contracted norovirus after eating at a Brighton location.

The number of food trucks in Boston has exploded in recent years, with trucks flooding college hotspots and busy downtown neighborhoods. The trend is so big that Mayor Martin J. Walsh in February convened a Food Truck Advisory Committee, a group of 10 food truck operators that provide recommendations on the city’s policies and permitting. So, the chief executive of the Chicken & Rice Guys, serves on that board.

City officials said the committee is focused on economic development opportunities for the entrepreneurs who run many of the trucks and not on health concerns. They declined to comment further.

*Megan Woolhouse can be reached at [megan.woolhouse@globe.com](mailto:megan.woolhouse@globe.com). Follow her on Twitter [@megwoolhouse](https://twitter.com/megwoolhouse).*

SHOW 15 COMMENTS

Stay updated, right in your news feed.

**Most Popular In Business** →



### **This defunct dry dock could be the city’s next great park**

Forget about building condos or offices at Dry Dock No. 4. The Seaport District needs a signature public space. [MORE...](#)

### **Baker picks for pot advisory board include anti-pot police chief**

Walpole Police Chief John Carmichael Jr. has vocally opposed both recreational and medical



marijuana. [MORE...](#)

---



## Chan buys yet another property in Savin Hill

Billionaire investor Gerald Chan scooped up another slice of Savin Hill Monday, closing on a deal to buy a 4.7-acre site steps from the Red Line station. [MORE...](#)

---



## Berklee students and grads create a noteworthy niche: music for video games

They've worked on "Super Knight Quest", "Mondrian", "Call of Duty", "Halo", and many others. [MORE...](#)

---



## Partners to acquire R.I.'s Care New England

Partners HealthCare has agreed to acquire one of Rhode Island's largest hospital operators, Care New England Health System of Providence. [MORE...](#)

---



## Remember Dan Lyons from HubSpot? He's back with more books

The Winchester-based writer said he has a two-book deal with the publisher of "Disrupted," his book about HubSpot. [MORE...](#)

---



## Get ready for Convention Center Expansion 2.0

The state's convention hall operator issued a request for proposals to design a master plan for the 70-acre campus. [MORE...](#)

---



## Now showing at Raytheon: Missiles in 3-D

Rocket scientists at Raytheon use a 320-degree ring of 72 ultra-high-definition LCD TVs, stacked 8 feet high, to make the abstract tangible. [MORE...](#)

---

## Sexist grill still par for the course at Charles River Country Club

A \$1 million renovation of the Newton club's men's locker room includes a single-sex pub complete



with food, booze, and a stone fireplace. [MORE...](#)

---

## ‘Cool Streets’ report ranks Boston’s hotspots

If you’ve been searching for the hippest neighborhoods in America, there’s an enormous commercial real estate brokerage with a list just for you. [MORE...](#)

---



## Friday’s business agenda

Earnings reports, gas prices, beginner workshops and other notable events and things to know. [MORE...](#)

---

## Top largest employers

This year, the Globe invited 2,021 companies to participate in the Top Places to Work survey, 332 went all the way through the process. More than 70,000 employees rated them on things like direction, execution, connection, management, work, pay, and benefits. Winners are declared in four categories: small companies (50 to 99 workers); medium (100 to 249); large (250 to 999); and largest (1,000 or more). Companies marked “new” may have appeared in a different size category on last year’s list. [MORE...](#)

---



## Investors want more women, minorities on corporate boards

This year the Massachusetts pension fund acted against 1,690 companies for failing to meet state criteria on gender and racial diversity on boards. [MORE...](#)

---

## A bill arrives a year later. Do you have to pay it?

As annoying as it is to be charged for something that seems a distant memory, as long as the charge is proper, you’re on the hook. [MORE...](#)

---

## Liberty Mutual shedding its workers’ comp roots

Liberty Mutual Insurance, once the country’s biggest provider of workers’ compensation insurance, is pulling back from the market. [MORE...](#)

---



## Charlie Baker's political calculus with MassHealth reforms

Governor Charlie Baker just made a big political gamble. Time will tell whether it will pay off. [MORE...](#)



## Is it time to drop the 'Donuts'?

At first glance, stripping the "Donuts" from Dunkin' Donuts might seem radical. [MORE...](#)



## GE confirms it's heading to Boston

Mayor Walsh said the expected property tax revenue that will come to the city will far outweigh what it gives up in future taxes. [MORE...](#)



## Five Nobel laureates backing antiaging dietary supplement

A pill called Basis claims to enable the body to produce more of a natural compound that supports a healthy metabolism. [MORE...](#)

### Top 10 Trending Articles

Most Viewed	Most Commented	Most Shared
-------------	----------------	-------------

Nick Cafardo: Which players may be available in trade after ...

Trump forsakes scenic traditions to vacation in the land of s...

Trump administration advances religious researchers' birth ...

Dick Albert, former Channel 5 weatherman, dies

Storms could bring hail and severe winds Saturday

What's it like be an NFL quarterback at 40? We asked Warr...  
**My Account**

There's one month left of summer. Here's what you can't mi...  
**Manage my Account**

Mobile Customer Service

**Sign Up For Newsletters**

Danby Appicola never considered retiring or playing for a t...



---

**Contact**

[Reagle's rousing '42nd Street' triumphs over turmoil](#)

---

[Help](#)

---

[FAQs](#)

---

[Globe newsroom](#)

---

[Advertise](#)

---

**Social**

---

[Facebook](#)

---

[Twitter](#)

---

[Google+](#)

---

**More**

---

[ePaper](#)

---

[News in Education](#)

---

[Archives](#)

---

[Privacy policy](#)

---

[Terms of service](#)

---

[Terms of purchase](#)

---

[Work at Boston Globe Media](#)