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Lowest Health Rating — ‘C’ — for Three Darien Food-Serving Establishments in Most Recent Inspections

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In the 13 most recent health inspection reports released by the Darien Health Department, three local food-serving establishments received "C" ratings — the worst.

Of the other 10 establishments, five received B ratings and five got A's. All the inspections took place from Aug. 1 to 8.

Editor's note: Links to the Stamford and Norwalk online health inspections for restaurants are included below and will be included in future reports on Darien health inspections. Although all local health departments use the state rating system, each department may vary in the way it interprets rules. Norwalk reports its 1-to-3 "Lighthouse" local ratings; Stamford lists violations and the points deducted for each.

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Here's an alphabetical list of the most recently released health inspection results (an explanation for each part of the list, including links, is just below the list).

Keep in mind that a food-serving establishment with a history of good ratings may occasionally get a poor inspection rating, occasionally the best do, and every restaurant normally gets a few things wrong (an explanation of how this list is put together is immediately below it):

—Cesco's Trattoria — Goodwives Shopping Center — 25 Old King's Hwy. North — [Aug. 1](#) — [Town Rating: B](#) — State Score: B

— Chipotle Mexican Grill — I-95 Darien North rest stop — Aug. 6 — [Town Rating: B](#) — State Score: 91

—Dunkin Donuts — I-95 Darien North rest stop — [Aug. 6](#) — [Town Rating: A](#) — State Score: 100

—McDonald's — I-95 Darien North rest stop — [Aug. 8](#) — [Town Rating: A](#) — State Score: 96

—McDonald's — I-95 Darien South rest stop — [Aug. 1](#) — [Town Rating: A](#) — State Score: 95

—**Post Corner Pizza — 847 Post Road — [Aug. 6](#) — [Town Rating: C](#) — State Score: 84** — *Inspector's Remarks: "Several cold-holding units not maintaining product temperature at or below 41 degrees. Some food voluntarily discarded. Air Plus Inc. out of Norwalk was notified during inspection by owner to service and repair the refrigeration problems. (Air Plus Inc. was on site prior to [inspector] leaving establishment. Service/repair invoice requested by Health Department; cups (no handle) used to dispense bulk items in service area; touching/using cell phone with gloved hands and returning to food preparation; label all spray bottles; thawing meatball on the counter at the cook line; bleach test strip not used or available at dish [washing] machine (found by owner); walk-in freezer floor unclean; ceiling tiles missing in dry storage and ice machine areas."* — *Inspector's Comments: "Fly strips cannot be located above prep areas or near finish ware-wash staging area. Some additional hand washing and glove use observed. Note: Large amount of roped sausage cooling, stacked and cover[ed] in produce walk-in [cooling unit]. A review of proper cooling techniques were discussed."*

—Sbarro — I-95 Darien North rest stop — [Aug. 8](#) — [Town Rating: C](#) — State Score: 88 — *Inspector's Remarks: "Times/log not being kept for items that use time instead of temperature for holding; food thermometer not readily available; knife in storage unclean; label all granular [containers]; [a] container holding spice cracked and taped. Replace; frozen condensate built up on upper portion of pizza prep table. Unit functioning normally otherwise."* — *Inspector's Comments: "Discussion with manager about keeping a more consistent log for out-of-temperature items. Hand washing, glove use, temperatures all good."*

—Subway — I-95 Darien North rest stop — [Aug. 6](#) — [Town Rating: B](#) — State Score: 98

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—Taco Bell — I-95 Darien North rest stop — [Aug. 8](#) — [Town Rating: A](#) — State Score: 94

—Taco Bell — I-95 Darien South rest stop — [Aug. 1](#) — [Town Rating: A](#) — State Score: 93

—Tokeneke Club Snack Bar — 4 Butlers Island Road — [Aug. 8](#) — [Town Rating: B](#) — State Score: 91

—Upper Crust Bakery & Cafe — 980 Post Road — [Aug. 1](#) — [Town Rating: B](#) — State Score: 91

—Zotos International — 100 Tokeneke Road — [Aug. 1](#) — [Town Rating: C](#) — State Score: 88 —

Inspector's Remarks: "All vegetables/fruit in cold-holding unit at 50 degrees (large amount of water in this unit????). Water temperature was 60 degrees; rice with vinegar in cold unit at 80 degrees. Rice without vinegar at 77 degrees. Sushi rolls made with raw fish (salmon and tuna) at 70 degrees in this unit *** no PH meter. No variance with [state] Department of Public Health. No Health Department approval for time vs. temperature holding; thermometers missing in two separate cold-holding units (service line and sandwich [bain marie](#)); three separate hand sinks are not easily accessible for hand washing; utensils stored unclean (under-the-counter drawer and knife in storage rack near sandwich station)." — *Inspector's Comments:* "Pagano's invoice for fish served raw dated July 11, 2018. Chef's log indicated it was frozen for 28 days(?) at 4 degrees to meet parasite destruction perimeters? (Must be -4 degrees). There is a need to review task changing and glove use with employees. (Storage and labeling discussion with QFO [[Qualified Food Operator](#)])."

Dates link to the food establishment's inspection report referenced here (when available, sometimes it takes a while to get posted online), and **Darien's own A/B/C ratings** link to a Web page showing several of the restaurant's recent inspection ratings.

See also:

- [Our previous article](#) showing restaurant inspection ratings (Aug. 2)
- [STAMFORD](#) online health inspection results
- [NORWALK](#) online health inspection ratings ([explanation](#) of ratings)

For restaurants and other food-serving establishments rated "C," and for some others of interest to the public (like schools) additional information is given. When we provide that information here, then words within brackets ("[]") have been added for clarity by Darienite.com; semicolons (";") separate individual comments by the inspectors. Each comment separated by semicolons is about a particular violation that triggers a deduction of one or more points from a perfect state score of 100.

How Darien's Food-Serving Places Are Rated

Restaurants in town are rated under the Darien Health Department's own A/B/C ratings system. Health inspectors also use the state health code regulations to score restaurants, with a perfect score set at 100, and demerits (of 1 to 4 points each) for various code violations.

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The Darien system takes into account problems that are ongoing, so a restaurant scoring higher than others on the state scale may actually get a lower score on the Darien scale.

You can find the past several inspection ratings under the Darien ratings system for food-serving establishments along with copies of inspection reports, including state health code scores [on this website](#).

Any establishment actually deemed unsafe can be closed by the town Health Department until violations are fixed. Town Health Director David Knauf says that has never happened in the time he's been with the department.