



February 11, 2019

The Honorable Click Bishop
Chair, Senate Finance Subcommittee
State Capitol Room 121
Juneau AK, 99801

Dear Senator Bishop:

Thank you for the opportunity to provide you with a brief overview of the Department of Environmental Conservation on February 8th. There was a question that arose during this meeting that required additional information. I have responded to this question below. If you would like additional information, or have additional questions, I am always happy to assist.

Was there an increase in issues around food illness or restaurant borne illness as a result of the significant prior reductions in the Division of Environmental Health? (Sen. Begich)

Below please find data related to complaints received by the Food Safety & Sanitation program, which range from unsanitary conditions, improper permitting, foodborne illness, etc. Complaints alleging foodborne illness have been broken out. It's important to note that instances of foodborne illness are known to be underreported. The Department has taken steps to make reporting complaints easier in recent years, through efforts such as an increased social media presence and reporting platforms like [iwaspoisoned.com](http://www.iwaspoisoned.com) and the Department's YUCK line (907-764-YUCK(9825)), which the Department hopes will raise awareness and encourage timely and accurate reporting.

Fiscal Year	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019 (thru 2/8/2019)
# of Complaints						
Alleging Illness	38	27	29	31	34	40
Total Number of Complaints	244	236	209	218	215	191

For information regarding actual foodborne illness cases, please refer to this Bulletin from the State Section of Epidemiology at DHSS: <http://epibulletins.dhss.alaska.gov/Document/Display?DocumentId=1992>

Sincerely,

Jeff Rogers
Director of Administrative Services

Cc: Alexei Painter, Legislative Finance Division
Josephine Stern, Office of Management and Budget
Christopher Clark, Staff to Senator Bishop