

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT AGENCY

ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH SERVICES DIVISION

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February 22, 2012

Surinder Sroa
Lotus Cuisine of India
704 4th St.
San Rafael, CA 94901

RE: *The Patch* article "6 Marin County Restaurants Receive 'Conditional Pass' Grade"

Dear Mr. Sroa,

I was surprised to read the above mentioned article published on 2/16/16, which stated that Lotus Cuisine is one of six restaurants operating with a "Conditional Pass". The article implied that Lotus has been operating with a Conditional Pass since its last inspection on 2/24/15.

A Conditional Pass is issued if an inspector observes 2 or more major violations during a routine inspection. Corrective action is taken immediately during the inspection to ensure that food at the restaurant is safe to eat. The restaurant is then re-inspected no later than 3 days after the initial inspection to verify that violations remain corrected. If these major violations continue to occur at subsequent inspections, enforcement action is taken, which could result in suspension of the facilities' permit to operate. At no time would this department allow a facility to continue operating with a Conditional Pass for an entire year.

During the inspection conducted on 2/24/15, I observed 2 major violations. Large pots of gravy were not properly cooled, and there was no sanitizer in the dishwasher. At the re-inspection, conducted on 2/26/15, cooked spinach was not properly cooled and there was still no sanitizer in the dishwasher. In both instances, improperly cooled food was thrown away, and utensils were sanitized with bleach in the sink. We discussed proper techniques for cooling, which were mostly in place at the second inspection, with the cooked spinach being the exception. We also discussed the importance of testing for sanitizer in the dishwasher. Invoices provided at the 2/26/15 inspection showed that the dishwasher had been serviced, but unfortunately was still not working properly.

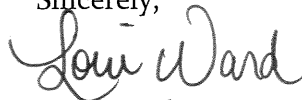
A second re-inspection was conducted on 2/27/15. All major violations were corrected and a Pass was issued. You provided cooling logs to show that all food was cooled quickly. All food in the walk-in was 41 F or below, and there was the proper amount of sanitizer in the dishwasher.

Coincidentally, a routine inspection was conducted on 2/16/16, the day the article was published. Only minor violations were noted and a Pass was issued.

Due to computer error that was not noticed when we began placarding in 2015, only the 2/24/15 inspection appeared on our website. When this was brought to our attention, it was immediately corrected. Had Environmental Health been contacted by the reporter to verify facts, we would have informed her that your facility has had a Pass placard since 2/27/15.

As an environmental health specialist, I am trained to observe details in your operation that you may not notice in order to help you operate your restaurant safely and effectively. The intention is not to "catch you in the act" or publically shame your business. I hope that the flawed article that has found its way onto social media does not negatively affect your business and bias your loyal customers. Based on my observations, I would feel comfortable eating at your business and recommending others to continue to do so as well.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Loni Ward".

Loni Ward, REHS
Environmental Health Services
County of Marin
415-473-7521

Cc: David Smail, REHS, Supervising Environmental Health Specialist
Rebecca Ng, REHS, Deputy Director