

Health department: Bonicki's outbreak could have resulted from improper food storage



Bonicki's Restaurant & Sports Bistro located at 1891 E Apple Ave, Muskegon, MI (*Madelyn Hastings | MLive.com*)



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MUSKEGON, MI – The Michigan Department of Community Health reports that an outbreak of foodborne illness at Bonicki's Sports Bistro, could have resulted from improper food storage.

In a news release Friday morning, April 11, the health department officials said the investigation at Bonicki's at 1891 East Apple Ave. turned up the presence of *Clostridium Perfringens*, a common bacteria that can cause foodborne illness.

The bacteria is found throughout nature but “typically causes illness when foods are served after improper storage or held at inadequate storage temperatures,” according to the health department.

Bonicki's General Manager Karen Mead responded to the news with a prepared statement.

We, the Bonicki's family, apologize for the recent event,” she said. “We would like to thank the community, our loyal customers and the Muskegon County health department.”

Bonicki's remains open for business. Its owner, Norm Spyke, **earlier told MLive Muskegon Chronicle** that he was working with public health officials and that the restaurant had maintained full compliance with health regulations.

Public Health-Muskegon County had reported receiving a least six calls from local customers who fell ill between April 3 and April 6. Spyke said he also called the department.

On Friday, Ken Kraus, health officer at Public Health-Muskegon County, called the incident a teachable moment for others in the food service industry.

“We are relieved to know the cause and are working with the restaurant to improve their food storage practices,” he said in a news release. “While it may take a bit more effort, following proper food cooling and storage procedures is an important part in preventing foodborne illness.”

The Center for Disease Control and Prevention considers *Clostridium Perfringens* one of the most common causes of foodborne illness in the United States and estimates that it is the cause of nearly a million cases of foodborne illness each year.

Bonicki's is the second major foodborne illness outbreak investigated by the health department in the last six months. In November, the agency began investigating **a salmonella outbreak at Pints & Quarts Pub and Grill and C.F. Prime** in Roosevelt Park.

More information about proper food storage techniques and *Clostridium Perfringens* can be found **[online](#)**.