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FOX 17

Mexican Restaurant Sees Business Pick up Slowly Following Norovirus Outbreak

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HOLLAND, Mich.-

As expected, business has been slow for the Holland area Mexican restaurant where several hundred people contracted Norovirus in late July.

After reopening his doors in early August, owner Alonzo Salinas has made some changes.

"I think a lot of people will always be cautious about what they eat and where they eat," said Salinas.

He certainly understands why. In July, over 200 people came down with Norovirus, believed to have stemmed from a visit to his restaurant. Within days, Salinas was deep cleaning the kitchen and dining room.

"Our customers put their trust in us and I believe we've done that," said Salinas.

He says he keeps in contact with the Ottawa County Health Department for things ranging from proper hand washing to food temperature.

While business has been slow, Salinas feels a sense of redemption after catering two popular events and one on the way. He also appreciates his loyal customers.

In September, Salinas will reopen the popular buffet, which had been closed since the illness outbreak. Once it reopens, he will have two employees, certified in food safety, handling the food for customers. Salinas also installed a hand sanitizer wall mount for customers to use right when they walk in.

Despite all this, Salinas says a handful of customers have come forward wanting to be reimbursed for hospital visits and lost wages during the time they fell ill. He says his insurance has and will continue to take care of any claims, as long as customers can prove them.