

County of Santa Clara

Department of Environmental Health

Consumer Protection Division

1555 Berger Drive, Suite 300, San Jose, CA 95112-2716

Phone (408) 918-3400 www.ehinfo.org



OFFICIAL INSPECTION REPORT

Facility FA0203081 - LA COSTA TAQUERIA		Site Address 16290 MONTEREY RD, MORGAN HILL, CA 95037		Inspection Date 02/11/2026		Placard Color & Score YELLOW 73		
Program PR0300828 - FOOD PREP / FOOD SVC OP 6-25 EMPLOYEES RC 3 - FP14			Owner Name MARLIN CORPORATION		Inspection Time 13:45 - 15:45			
Inspected By GINA STIEHR		Inspection Type ROUTINE INSPECTION		Consent By JOAQUIN				FSC Guellrmo Hernandez 6/28/2029

RISK FACTORS AND INTERVENTIONS		IN	OUT		COS/SA	N/O	N/A	PBI
			Major	Minor				
K01	Demonstration of knowledge; food safety certification			X				
K02	Communicable disease; reporting/restriction/exclusion	X						S
K03	No discharge from eyes, nose, mouth	X						
K04	Proper eating, tasting, drinking, tobacco use	X						
K05	Hands clean, properly washed; gloves used properly	X						
K06	Adequate handwash facilities supplied, accessible	X						
K07	Proper hot and cold holding temperatures		X		X			N
K08	Time as a public health control; procedures & records						X	
K09	Proper cooling methods		X		X			N
K10	Proper cooking time & temperatures	X						
K11	Proper reheating procedures for hot holding					X		
K12	Returned and reservice of food	X						
K13	Food in good condition, safe, unadulterated	X						
K14	Food contact surfaces clean, sanitized	X						
K15	Food obtained from approved source	X						
K16	Compliance with shell stock tags, condition, display						X	
K17	Compliance with Gulf Oyster Regulations						X	
K18	Compliance with variance/ROP/HACCP Plan						X	
K19	Consumer advisory for raw or undercooked foods							
K20	Licensed health care facilities/schools: prohibited foods not being offered						X	
K21	Hot and cold water available	X						
K22	Sewage and wastewater properly disposed	X						
K23	No rodents, insects, birds, or animals	X						

GOOD RETAIL PRACTICES		OUT	COS
K24	Person in charge present and performing duties		
K25	Proper personal cleanliness and hair restraints		
K26	Approved thawing methods used; frozen food		
K27	Food separated and protected	X	
K28	Fruits and vegetables washed		
K29	Toxic substances properly identified, stored, used		
K30	Food storage: food storage containers identified		
K31	Consumer self service does prevent contamination		
K32	Food properly labeled and honestly presented		
K33	Nonfood contact surfaces clean		
K34	Warewash facilities: installed/maintained; test strips	X	
K35	Equipment, utensils: Approved, in good repair, adequate capacity		
K36	Equipment, utensils, linens: Proper storage and use		
K37	Vending machines		
K38	Adequate ventilation/lighting; designated areas, use		
K39	Thermometers provided, accurate		
K40	Wiping cloths: properly used, stored		X
K41	Plumbing approved, installed, in good repair; proper backflow devices		X
K42	Garbage & refuse properly disposed; facilities maintained		
K43	Toilet facilities: properly constructed, supplied, cleaned		
K44	Premises clean, in good repair; Personal/chemical storage; Adequate vermin-proofing		
K45	Floor, walls, ceilings: built, maintained, clean		
K46	No unapproved private home/living/sleeping quarters		
K47	Signs posted; last inspection report available		

OFFICIAL INSPECTION REPORT

Facility FA0203081 - LA COSTA TAQUERIA	Site Address 16290 MONTEREY RD, MORGAN HILL, CA 95037	Inspection Date 02/11/2026
Program PR0300828 - FOOD PREP / FOOD SVC OP 6-25 EMPLOYEES RC 3 - FP14	Owner Name MARLIN CORPORATION	Inspection Time 13:45 - 15:45
K48	Plan review	
K49	Permits available	
K58	Placard properly displayed/posted	

Comments and Observations

Major Violations

K07 - 8 Points - Improper hot and cold holding temperatures; 11387.1, 113996, 113998, 114037, 114343(a)

Inspector Observations:

1. Measured multiple foods at their respective temperatures in the upright preparation cooler adjacent to the cashier:

- Crab at 51F
- Octopus at 49F
- Ceviche at 50F
- Tomato and cucumber at 48F

The person in charge stated that the foods were placed in the cold top preparation inserts approximately 30 minutes prior. The cold preparation cooler was observed turned off at the beginning of this inspection.

[CA] PHFs shall be held at 41°F or below or at 135°F or above.

[COS] The violation was corrected by relocating the foods to the walk in cooler to cool to 41F.

2. Measured one container of sour cream set at ambient temperature at the preparation line at 52F. The food worker stated that the sour cream was removed from the cooler approximately 15 minutes prior.

[CA] PHFs shall be held at 41°F or below or at 135°F or above.

[COS] The violation was corrected by relocating the sour cream to the preparation cooler to cool to 41F.

K09 - 8 Points - Improper cooling methods; 114002, 114002.1

Inspector Observations:

Major Violation

1. Observed a container of broth containing cooked tomatoes, shrimp bouillon, chiles, and other spices in the preparation sink set to cool in an ice bath. The broth measured at 101F and the person in charge stated that the broth was cooked and cool approximately 4 hours prior.

[CA] After heating or hot holding, Potentially Hazardous Foods (PHFs) shall be cooled rapidly from 135°F to 70°F within 2 hours and from 70°F to 41°F within 4 hours. Approved cooling methods include: 1) Placing the food in shallow pans 2) Separating the food into thinner or smaller portions. 3) Using rapid cooling equipment (Ex. blast chiller) 4) Using containers that facilitate heat transfer (ex. stainless steel) 5) Adding ice as an ingredient. 6) Using ice paddles 7) Using an ice bath and stirring frequently 8) Accordance with a HACCP plan. Cooling foods shall have enough space around the containers for cold air to circulate, be loosely covered, or uncovered and stirred as frequently needed to evenly cool.

[COS] The violation was corrected by voluntarily discarding 15 L of broth.

Minor Violation

Observed one covered deep metal container of cooked beef measured at 89F and one covered deep metal container of cooked chicken at 83F in a melted ice bath at the back preparation table. The person in charge stated the foods were cooked and started the cooling process less than one hour prior.

[CA] Properly cool PHF's using shallow containers and food may be left uncovered or loosely covered to allow rapid cooling. When cooling PHF's, stir frequently to facilitate rapid cooling.

OFFICIAL INSPECTION REPORT

Facility FA0203081 - LA COSTA TAQUERIA	Site Address 16290 MONTEREY RD, MORGAN HILL, CA 95037	Inspection Date 02/11/2026
Program PR0300828 - FOOD PREP / FOOD SVC OP 6-25 EMPLOYEES RC 3 - FP14	Owner Name MARLIN CORPORATION	Inspection Time 13:45 - 15:45

[COS] The chicken and beef were submerged in an ice bath with water added to facility rapid cooling.

Minor Violations

K01 - 3 Points - Inadequate demonstration of knowledge; food manager certification

Inspector Observations:

Multiple food workers had expired food handler certificates.

[CA] Each food handler shall maintain a valid food handler card for the duration of his or her employment as food handler. A valid food handler card shall be provided within 30 days of after the date of hire.

K27 - 2 Points - Food not separated and unprotected; 113984(a-d,f), 113986, 114060, 114067(a,d,e,j), 114069(a,b), 114077, 114089.1(c), 114143(c)

Inspector Observations:

1. Above raw foods (raw beef, raw pork) stored above produce and ready to eat foods in the walk in cooler.

[CA] All food shall be separated and protected from cross-contamination. Store all raw meat or other raw products of animal origin below ready-to-eat food items.

2. Observed boxes of food stored directly on the floor in the walk in freezer.

[CA] Food shall be stored at least 6 inches above the floor to prevent contamination.

K34 - 2 Points - Warewashing facilities: not installed or maintained; no test strips; 114067(f,g), 114099, 114099.3, 114099.5, 114101(a), 114101.1, 114101.2, 114103, 114107, 114125

Inspector Observations:

Sanitizer testing strips for chlorine were not available at the time of inspection.

[CA] Testing equipment and materials shall be readily available at all times.

K40 - 2 Points - Wiping cloths: improperly used and stored; 114135, 114185.1 114185.3(d,e)

Inspector Observations:

Observed multiuse wiping cloths stored on the preparation cooler counter outside of a sanitizer solution while not in use.

[CA] Wiping towels shall be stored in sanitizing solution of an approved concentration when not in use (100 ppm - chlorine, 200 ppm - quaternary ammonium).

K41 - 2 Points - Plumbing unapproved, not installed, not in good repair; improper backflow devices; 114171, 114189.1, 114190, 114192, 114193, 114193.1, 114199, 114201, 114269

Inspector Observations:

Observed a leak below the right compartment of the three compartment sink.

[CA] Repair plumbing fixture and maintain in clean and good repair.

Performance-Based Inspection Questions

Needs Improvement - Proper hot and cold holding temperatures.

Needs Improvement - Proper cooling methods.

OFFICIAL INSPECTION REPORT

Facility FA0203081 - LA COSTA TAQUERIA	Site Address 16290 MONTEREY RD, MORGAN HILL, CA 95037	Inspection Date 02/11/2026
Program PR0300828 - FOOD PREP / FOOD SVC OP 6-25 EMPLOYEES RC 3 - FP14	Owner Name MARLIN CORPORATION	Inspection Time 13:45 - 15:45

Measured Observations

Item	Location	Measurement	Comments
Pork	Steam table	139.00 Fahrenheit	
Cooked beans	Steam table	148.00 Fahrenheit	
Sanitizer concentration	Three compartment sink	100.00 PPM	Chlorine
Beef	Walk in cooler	36.00 Fahrenheit	
Water	Restroom	108.00 Fahrenheit	
Pork	Walk in cooler	40.00 Fahrenheit	
Shredded cheese	Preparation cooler across from cooks line	41.00 Fahrenheit	
Water	Front hand washing sink	100.00 Fahrenheit	
Pico de gallo	Reach in preparation cooler adjacent to cashier	41.00 Fahrenheit	
Ceviche	Reach in preparation cooler adjacent to cashier	40.00 Fahrenheit	
Water	Back hand washing sink	104.00 Fahrenheit	
Pico de gallo	Preparation cooler across from cooks line	41.00 Fahrenheit	
Diced Pork	Walk in cooler	35.00 Fahrenheit	
Water	Three compartment sink	131.00 Fahrenheit	

Overall Comments:

A joint routine inspection was conducted on this date with G. Stiehr, REHS, and J. Luces, REHS. This report was generated by J. Luces

When required to determine compliance, a single reinspection will be conducted without additional charge. If subsequent reinspections are required, an hourly fee (minimum one hour) at the current rate approved by the Board of Supervisors will be assessed for each and every reinspection until the necessary changes or corrections are made. Unless otherwise noted by the inspector, all violations are to be corrected no later than **2/25/2026**. Any major change in menu or any change in ownership must have prior approval by this Department. This may require structural and/or equipment changes or remodeling to accommodate new operations.

Legend:

[CA]	Corrective Action
[COS]	Corrected on Site
[N]	Needs Improvement
[NA]	Not Applicable
[NO]	Not Observed
[PBI]	Performance-based Inspection
[PHF]	Potentially Hazardous Food
[PIC]	Person in Charge
[PPM]	Part per Million
[S]	Satisfactory
[SA]	Suitable Alternative
[TPHC]	Time as a Public Health Control



Received By: Joaquin Moncada
Person in charge
Signed On: February 11, 2026