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## Health inspectors review seafood distributor's practices

Feb 17, 2005, 8:34 PM

Reported by Karen Cole

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The Metro Health Department is making calls to restaurants to check for unsafe food that might be in their kitchens. It all started when inspectors went to one local food distributor's home.

Metro health officials are currently looking for filleted fish that may have been prepared improperly and sold to at least a dozen restaurants.

Even though we live hundreds of miles from any ocean, fresh fish is available right here in Nashville.

Filleted fish from one wholesale distributor may now be pulled from area restaurants after state inspectors found seafood being cut up in one man's backyard.

"Our inspectors observed the product being processed behind the residence. We cited him for processing seafood in an unlicensed, unapproved facility, under unsanitary conditions," said Tom Womack, Dept. of Agriculture.

Keith Pfister and his company, "Taste of New Orleans ", supply seafood to dozens of Nashville restaurants. But Metro Health Officials say they're now concerned about the safety of the product and those who eat it.

"If they consumed fish filleted in this man's backyard, am I to say the fish is contaminated? I can't say that. I just know that to keep fish safe you need to use proper procedures and it must be handled in a sanitary fashion," said Jerry Roland, Metro Health Dept.

Channel 4 News was unable to speak with Keith Pfister, but his father and the owner of the company assures the public their product is safe.

On the phone from New Orleans, Pfister says his son buys fish right off the boat in the Gulf in Mexico and fillets it at the restaurants he sells to. On Thursday he was cutting fish for a private party for his wife. He claims competitors are out to hurt their business and indeed it was another seafood distributor who complained to the state.

"We don't know of any immediate health risks to the public. We want to be proactive and preventative," said Womack.

Channel 4 News called several restaurants and no one had anything bad to say about "Taste of New Orleans". The restaurants said they have always been happy with the quality of his product.

Metro Health has also contacted health officials in the state of Louisiana where Keith Pfister's company is licensed.

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WEATHER TEAM



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