

# Cleveland Department of Public Health

## The Challenge

A study by a former U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) economist estimates the total economic impact of food-borne illness across the nation at a combined \$152 billion annually. Each year, 76 million people fall ill and 5,000 die from food-borne illnesses — and inspections combined with education for food workers remain the best defense.

In Cleveland, OH, there are thousands of establishments that must undergo thorough food health code inspections. These inspections protect the city's 3 million residents and visitors against more than 250 food-borne illnesses stemming from health code violations.

The reports include details of recent food violations, which range from inadequate temperature control to improper labeling to cross-contamination of foods. They also include health inspectors' comments about kitchen sanitation and follow-up data on whether a business has addressed previously incurred violations.

That's why it's important that Clevelanders have access to these records to see who is and is not meeting requirements. Hard copies of restaurant reports have always been available to the public, but processing requests was time-consuming. Commissioner Willie Bess of the Cleveland Department of Public Health (CDPH) needed a solution that would turn their huge inventory of paper food inspection records into an easy-to-use, on-demand online system through which the public could look up reports themselves.

## The Solution

After conducting a nationwide search for a document management solution, Bess selected eBridge because it met the rigorous requirements put forth in the city's request for proposal (RFP) and was the most affordable.

### Cleveland Department of Public Health

- Background:** Established in 1910  
3 million residents  
More than 1,000 restaurants  
25 public health inspectors
- Challenges:** Streamlining requests for restaurant inspections from the public  
Centralizing records for staff
- Result:** Inspection reports on demand  
Reduced budget for storage and supplies



During training, the CDPH IT staff created an interface using eBridge's Web Services on the CDPH web site, where citizens of Cleveland could look up documents stored online.

## The Result

The CDPH and the City of Cleveland have been using eBridge since early 2009 and are pleased with the hosted application.

"We believe that the most unique aspect of eBridge is its ability to display documents for the public to view," said Bess. "Allowing the public to view restaurant inspections online will save government offices and taxpayers money. As government budgets continue to be cut, hosted document management systems will continue to be a cost-effective way of storing and sharing public records."

Now, when someone wants to see a restaurant inspection, they search CDPH's web site for the "Food Safety" section under the Division of Environment and click on "Review Inspection Report." They can then print or e-mail the results to someone else.

District Supervisor Chantez Williams said that with the volume of documents the city's 25 health inspectors deal with on a daily basis, it is safe to say they have saved money on storage costs. Chantez is also pleased they have a disaster-recovery plan in place in case any unfortunate event threatens their original documents.

## About eBridge

Since 2001, eBridge has helped businesses eliminate the waste, risk and inefficiencies of paper-based records and processes by digitizing and storing documents in a central online repository. Web-based file cabinets allow users to securely access documents from any computer with an Internet connection. To explore what eBridge can do for your business, visit us online at [www.eBridge.com](http://www.eBridge.com) to read more case studies, or contact one of our industry experts at [info@eBridge.com](mailto:info@eBridge.com) or (877) 676-6067.