

# Rat droppings prompt temporary closure of school cooking program

BY ED FLETCHER, OCTOBER 06, 2017

The culinary arts program at John F. Kennedy High School was shut down Wednesday after county inspectors found rat droppings and other signs of vermin in the campus's commercial kitchen.

Students enrolled in the class provide catering and operate a cafe – usually open around the holidays – according to a 2015 Sacramento Bee story. Neither the school nor Sacramento City Unified School District officials returned calls for comment Friday.

Wednesday's inspection by Sacramento County health officials was routine, according to the report posted online.

Some 14 rat droppings were found below the dish washing machine and dish washing area, six more droppings were in the dry storage area, the report stated. There was also a gnawed bag of flour.

“Food preparation/sales of any kind is not permitted until vermin activity has been eliminated,” the report reads.

The facility is already being treated by a pest control company, the kitchen instructor told health officials.

The kitchen was also cited for pink mold-like residue inside the ice machine, lack of hot water for hand washing, blood residue on a shelf, and broken dish washing and disposal units. The county program allows for a rapid re-inspection once the issues have been cleared up.

The program is one of several aimed at training students for jobs in the restaurant industry in the Sacramento region. Statewide, nearly 34,000 public school students are taking courses in food science, dietetics and nutrition, food service, hospitality, and tourism and recreation, according to the California Department of Education.