

דרך קצרה

Brief summaries of cRc Kashrus Policies

MICROWAVE OVEN

In DK 54 we saw that *zei'ah* (*hot vapors*) that rise out of a non-kosher food, cause *ta'am* to transfer into the surface that it encounters. For example, if a person heated up non-kosher soup in the microwave, the *zei'ah* coming out of the soup would hit the ceiling of the microwave and render it non-kosher. We also saw that if a kosher food is subsequently cooked in that same place, and vapors from that food condense on that same ceiling and drip down, the kosher will become non-kosher.

A microwave oven is perfectly suited for these types of transfers of *ta'am* because the food is hot and the interior surfaces are cold. *Ta'am* from foods cooked in the microwave are absorbed into the ceiling, and when a subsequent food is cooked condensation will form and drip into it. Thus, a microwave used for non-kosher or *chametz* must be *kashered* before it is used for kosher or *Pesach* food.

The standard method of *kashering* a microwave is by mimicking the way it was used for food (i.e., כבולעו כר פולטו). Specifically: [A] The interior surfaces are cleaned thoroughly, and the microwave is not used for 24 hours. [B] The glass plate should be removed from the microwave (and replaced) because it cannot be *kashered*. [C] A bowl of water is boiled for an extended amount of time in the microwave. This causes the chamber to become filled with steam, and the steam's contact with the surfaces serves as the *kashering*.

What about the possibility that bits of residue might be stuck in the small holes through which the steam vents? Doesn't *Rema* rule that anytime an item has cracks or crevices which are difficult to clean, the custom is not to allow *kashering*?

Some understand that *Rema* is specific to *Pesach* (since *chametz* on *Pesach* is *assur b'mashehu*) and therefore do not allow *kashering* of microwaves for *Pesach* but will allow it year-round. Others allow *kashering* even for *Pesach* based on an assumption that any *chametz* that falls out of the holes on *Pesach* will drop to the floor of the microwave and not end up in the food.

CRC POLICIES

117. Is it permitted to *kasher* a microwave oven for year-round? What about for *Pesach*?

Both are permitted

118. Which of the following are required when *kashering* a microwave oven:

a. Replace glass tray?

Yes

b. Boil water till chamber fills with steam?

Yes

c. Overflow boiling water?

No



Kosher Certification

d. Cover food used after *kashering*?

Not required, but commendable when using on *Pesach*

מראה מקומות

שולחן ערוך סימן תנ"א סעיף י"ח