



DUNEDIN CITY COUNCIL

Kaunihera-a-rohe o Otepoti

ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH

IN THIS ISSUE

- KEEP IT HOT – OR COLD
- SAFE FRIDGE STORAGE
- CLEANING WITH THE CORRECT EQUIPMENT
- THE FOOD SAFETY BYLAW – HOW YOUR GRADE IS DETERMINED
- MEET THE BUGS - Norovirus
- IF YOU CAN'T PEEL IT – CLEAN IT

welcome!

Welcome to the 37th issue of the Safe Food newsletter. We hope that you are keeping warm and healthy.

Environmental Health has produced a new hand-washing poster, which is printed on the back page of this newsletter. We suggest you have a thorough look at it, go through the required procedure with your staff and hang the poster up next to the wash hand basin.

If you would like further copies of the poster please contact Environmental Health on 477 4000, or ask your Environmental Health Officer.

Now that all food premises in Dunedin have been graded your current grade MUST be displayed where the public can see it. Please ensure that you are doing this, as non-compliance is an offence under the Food Safety Bylaw and could result in a fine of up to \$20,000!



KEEP IT HOT – OR COLD

Soups, stews and similar dishes are popular during the cooler months. These types of food are generally made in large batches for use over one or more days. Food cooked in large volumes poses food safety risks both during the cooling process for storage and when hot holding for service.

After cooking a batch of soup, etc it must be cooled as quickly as possible and then refrigerated. Splitting the food into small portions, which should be placed in shallow containers, can speed up the cooling process. Frequent stirring will also help, as can an ice bath.

Reheating must be done as quickly as possible, and must certainly not be done in a bain marie, crock pot or similar. Once hot a temperature of at least 63°C must be maintained.

Under no circumstances must food be kept warm, with individual portions being heated up when an order is placed. Although the original cooking process will probably have killed off all viable bacteria, some bacteria are able to form spores, which are not destroyed even at high temperatures. If the food then sits, at a temperature between 4°C and 63°C (yes – the Danger Zone!) the spores germinate to viable bacteria, which in turn can produce a toxin. A final reheating step will yet again kill off the bacteria, but the toxin is not destroyed, and is consumed along with the food – potentially causing food poisoning.

HANDWASHING - when, how and why

Proper hand washing may eliminate up to half of the cases of foodborne illness! Wash your hands –

- Before starting work
- After a break
- After visiting the toilet
- In between different tasks in the kitchen
- After handling raw meat, poultry and eggs
- Before putting on gloves
- After taking gloves off
- After eating, coughing or blowing your nose
- After touching rubbish
- After using chemicals
- After handling money

Ensure your wash hand basin is clean, accessible and fully maintained: water of at least 38°C, soap (preferably liquid), a clean nailbrush and single service towels.

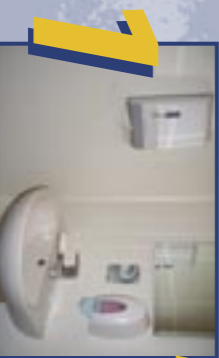
Use warm water and soap to form a lather over hands and wrists.

Scrub under and around fingernails with a nailbrush.

Rub hands together vigorously, washing the gaps between the fingers — and don't miss the back of the thumb, around the wrists etc. This should take at least 20 seconds — about as long as it takes to sing Happy Birthday twice.

Take care not to re-contaminate hands from dirty taps. Clean and sanitize taps regularly.

Dry hands thoroughly. Use one piece of paper towel to dry off the bulk of water and a second piece to finish off.



1
If the hand basin is not easy to access it is unlikely that it will be used.



2
Warm water is more effective at removing the body oils that hold bacteria and viruses.



3
Bacteria and viruses need to be coaxed out of these hiding places.



4
This ensures that dislodged bacteria are washed away.



5
You could use a paper towel to turn off the tap.



6
1000 times as many germs spread from wet hands than dry hands.
Never use a tea towel, your apron etc.



DUNEDIN CITY COUNCIL

ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH



A Reminder From DrinkSafe

Every on licence has the following condition:

The licensee must ensure that signs are prominently displayed within the licensed premises detailing information regarding alternative forms of transport from the premises.

This means that you must have signs up that advise patrons that if they want a taxi that you'll call for one on their behalf, or that the numbers for taxi companies are clearly on display by the telephone that customers may use. Remember that not all of your customers will be locals and know where the taxi ranks are.

For restaurants, it's a good habit to ask patrons when they are presented with the bill if they would like a taxi to be called for them.



safe FRIDGE STORAGE

Good food storage in the refrigerator is important and can prevent contamination of the fridge and its contents, as well as reducing the risk of cross contamination. Here are some easy guidelines that will help keep your fridge clean, running at a good temperature and reduce the risk of cross contamination.

- Ensure that all food is kept in food grade lidded containers. This will help prevent spills and leakage, which can lead to bacteria contaminating the fridge.
- Once a package is open immediately decant it into a lidded food container.
- Keep raw foods away from cooked foods and ensure that all raw meats are stored at the bottom of the fridge.
- Store the products in appropriate areas such as:
 - Cheese and dairy products on the top shelf. Then,
 - Cooked meats.
 - Salads and salad products.
 - Pies, pates, sauces etc
 - Raw red meats and meat products
 - Raw poultry.
- Undertake good stock rotation procedures; date the items for the day they are to be discarded. Generally foods can be kept for:
 - Raw meats: 2 days.
 - Mince or cubed meat: 1 day.
 - Bacon: 7 days.
 - Ham: 2 days.
 - Cooked meats: 2 days.
 - Sausages: 3 days.
- Ensure foods are cooled quickly and sufficiently (see Safe Food Newsletter Issue 33) before putting them in the refrigerator, to avoid an increase the unit temperature.
- Do not overfill the refrigerator, this will ensure good airflow and will help maintain a correct air temperature throughout the fridge.
- Put cold foods back into the refrigerator immediately after use.
- Ensure an area is put aside for defrosting.
- Monitor and record unit temperatures, preferably first thing in the morning and last thing at night. Temperatures should be 4°C or less. If not call a serviceman.



cleaning with the CORRECT EQUIPMENT

Food premises require continual cleaning and sanitising to eliminate any type of micro-organisms that may contaminate food and lead to food poisoning.

Some areas, equipment and surfaces are more prone to contamination than others and will need more frequent cleaning and sanitation, and in some cases specialised procedures will be required.

Cleaning Agents

In any commercial operation, it is vital that commercial-grade cleaning agents are used. Domestic, 'off-the-supermarket-shelf' type chemicals are not strong enough to work effectively in busy premises preparing food for sale to the public.

Suppliers of commercial grade cleaning agents can be found in the Telecom Yellow pages under "Cleaning Equipment and Supplies" and "Cleansers and Detergents". Make sure your supplier understands your requirements, explains the correct use of each cleaning chemical and follows up to ensure that the products supplied are meeting your requirements.

The initial cost of commercial-grade cleaning agents may seem high. However, if used correctly, they should prove cost-effective both in terms of the cost of the chemicals themselves and labour-time. Buying domestic agents may prove more costly if they are not doing the job and your premises is implicated in a food poisoning event as a result.

In most cases, only two or three chemicals are required to do a thorough job, but keep in mind that both detergents and disinfectants must be used to ensure the cleaning process is effective and efficient.

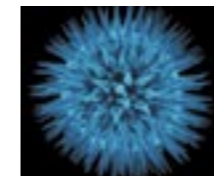
Detergents remove dirt and grease but only work well in clean, regularly changed water. Detergents do not destroy micro-organisms so although the item looks clean, it may still be covered with harmful bacteria.

Disinfectants (also referred to as sanitisers) destroy bacteria and other micro-organisms if used according to the manufacturer's instructions.

Points to remember about cleaning agents:

- Use the right cleaning agent for the surface you are cleaning.
- Use the correct amount and follow the manufacturer's instructions.
- Do not mix cleaning agents.
- Use cleaning equipment that is clean and in good order. Dirty cleaning equipment won't clean other areas!
- Always store cleaning agents and equipment in a safe place, away from food and food contact areas.
- Never decant cleaning agents into empty food containers.

Remember that cleaning equipment must also be cleaned and dried after use. Brushes and mops should be hung off the floor, buckets emptied and turned upside down and cloths, washed, dried and stored away.



meet the BUGS

Norovirus

Norovirus is a highly contagious and resilient virus that is a common cause of food poisoning or "gastroenteritis". Many outbreaks have occurred

and have frequently been isolated to salad ingredients and shellfish. The largest outbreak in New Zealand, with 350 cases, occurred recently at an Eden Park rugby match, when a catering firm failed to follow serving instructions for imported oysters.

The main source of the virus is from food that has been exposed to sewerage or contaminated water at the growing or cultivation stage. It is important to remember that viral particles can survive freezing, pasteurisation and low levels of chlorine. It only takes about 10 particles to become sick and they can survive on surfaces for up to 12 days. Ensure you use the correct sanitisers and chemical dosage when cleaning surfaces (see 'Cleaning with the Correct Equipment' article)

The illness has a quick on-set, usually 15-50 hours, depending on the dose and can last between 2-5 days. Symptoms are diarrhoea, projectile vomiting and stomach cramps. Some sufferers also have a fever, chills, muscle aches and headaches. All food handlers must be excluded from work until totally symptom free for 48 hours (don't forget to log this into the sickness policy!), to prevent them from contaminating the kitchen and/or food.

'THE FOOD SAFETY BYLAW 2005' – how your grade is determined!

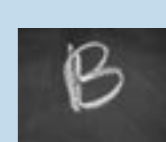
All food premises are graded at least annually and the achieved grade is printed on your registration certificate, which must be displayed so that it can easily be seen by the public. The grade you achieve is based on your performance in four categories, with a maximum score of 5 in each category and therefore a maximum total of 20:

- A** – excellent 17-20 points – you need to score at least 4 points in each category
- B** – good 12-16 points
- D** – poor 0-11 points – the premises are likely to be closed until the standard is raised to a B grade.

The four categories are:

- 1. Conduct and practices:** how you are protecting and handling food – is it stored in the right place, covered, at the right temperature, is there effective pest control, etc? To get top points you need to monitoring and recording temperatures, have a sickness policy in place etc.
- 2. Structure of the premises:** what condition is the premises in? Are all surfaces smooth, impervious and easily cleanable, is the floor in good condition, and is damage and wear and tear being identified and repaired appropriately?
- 3. Cleaning and sanitizing:** how clean are appliances, surfaces, walls etc and of course those hard to reach areas – under, behind and between things, floor corners and more. Are commercial cleaning products being used? For a high score (4 or 5) you need to be using a written cleaning schedule.
- 4. Training:** what percentage of food handlers have been trained to unit standard 167 and is there a least one person in a supervisory role who has been trained to unit standard 168. Keep training records on site to verify this.

Note: if the combined score for cleaning and sanitising and, conduct and practices is low (4 or less) the score for training is automatically 0, even if everyone is trained. If training is not being put into practice it is not of any use and you may be required to do refresher training.



if you can't PEEL it – CLEAN it

Fruit, berries, vegetables and herbs need to be washed prior to cooking or serving, particularly when they are being served as fresh foods, such as salads, juices, garnishes and sandwich fillings.

Produce may be contaminated with disease causing microorganisms and residues from herbicides or pesticides. It is important that these contaminants are removed before food is eaten.

To minimise food contamination and food poisoning:

- Wash your hands before working with fresh produce.
- Wash vegetables and fruits thoroughly before cooking or eating, including:
 - pre-packaged salad greens like lettuce, fresh herbs and sprouts.
 - when preparing juices, smoothies etc.
- Wash under running water.
- Scrub vegetables and fruits where necessary to remove soil residues.
- Dry produce with disposable paper towels.
- Wash fruits and vegetables in separate sink area to the wash up sink for utensils, or sanitise these areas thoroughly between uses.

Parsley, alfalfa sprouts, strawberries, spring onions and lettuce are examples of produce that have been identified as the cause of food borne disease outbreaks. A recent example of Salmonella poisoning was linked to lettuce served in fast food, takeaway and catering premises. While Salmonella is frequently spread by under-cooked or contamination from raw poultry in the kitchen, lettuce and other raw vegetables are also a known source.

The risk of food poisoning can be reduced by good food hygiene practices. These include washing and preparing vegetables, like lettuce away from other foods to avoid cross contamination.

ENVIRONMENTAL AUDIT SERVICES

NZFSA approved

IANZ accredited

- Third party independent food safety audits
- Full, partial, phased or targeted food safety audits
- Internal food safety audits in preparation for external audits
- Internal audit training to ensure food safety managers have the necessary skills
- Auditing of approved suppliers

Contact Roger O'Brien on (03) 474 3726
Providing a competitively priced local audit service