Tea Towels

Did you know that tea towels can be a source of cross contamination? Tea towels and other cloth towels are very absorbent due to their fabric weave. A used tea towel may contain harmful bacteria which can be spread to your hands and other food contact surfaces such as prep benches, crockery and cutlery. As a result tea towels should never be used to wipe down benches and to dry hands or dishes.

In addition, tea towels should never be used to cover food. Ideally food businesses should be using food grade materials such as plastic wrap, aluminium foil or lids to cover food.

Stock Rotation

Stock control is important as it ensures that foods are not kept beyond their shelf life and that food is safe and suitable for consumption. As new food is received by the food business, it is best to rotate all stock so that the older food is at the front of the storage area and will be used/sold first.

All damaged foods should be removed from display and storage areas. Ensure regular inspections of stock to ensure all foods are still in date. Food that is past its 'Use By' date cannot be eaten and must not be sold after this date because they may pose a health or safety risk. Food businesses should be checking their stock for foods which have a 'Best Before' date. Foods that have a 'Best Before' date can be legally sold after that date provided the food is fit for human consumption.

Self- service Buffets

Running a buffet at your food business can introduce a number of food safety risks.

Buffets often include displays of hot and cold food, as well as food held at room temperature, which means that keeping a close eye on time and temperature control is essential.

Buffets that provide potentially hazardous foods (such as seafood, meat and dairy products) can be risky as bacteria thrive in these types of food and can reach harmful levels quickly.

Follow the rules below to improve food safety at your buffet.

- Allocate at least one staff member to supervise the buffet or self-service area, and train them on the steps to take if they notice a possible contamination incident.
- Have at least one cleaned and sanitised serving utensil for every food item. This discourages customers from using the same serving utensil to pick up several different food items.
- Always remove any food or utensils that may have become contaminated from service and replenish with fresh items.
- Customers should be encouraged to use clean plates, cutlery and napkins when they revisit the buffet for refills.
- Ideally all potentially hazardous food items should be displayed in hot or cold displays outside of the Temperature Danger Zone (5°C to 60°C). For items being held under temperature control, check the temperature every 2 hours with a cleaned and sanitised calibrated thermometer and keep records of these temperatures when taken.
- If you must hold food at room temperature, be sure to discard of any food that's been on display for 2 hours or longer. It's best practice to prepare and display all food in small batches that can be used within a 2 hour timeframe.
- There are some practical steps that can be taken to protect food and utensils from contamination. Use lids or covers on each food item where possible, and always use sneeze guards over the buffet area to prevent bacteria from sneezing or saliva reaching the food. Ensure that the handles of serving utensils do not touch the food as bacteria can be passed from the customers hand to the utensil to the food.
- Never add fresh food to old batches of food, and never re-use food that has been sitting on a buffet table, even if it's only been there a short time.

Food **Essentials**

Sanitising of Food Contact Surfaces

Do you know the difference between cleaning and sanitising? Cleaning means removing all organic matter and objectionable odours from the surface. All food contact surfaces must be cleaned before sanitising.

Sanitising means to apply heat and/or chemicals or other processes to a surface to reduce the number of bacteria to a level that is safe for food

All food contact surfaces such as benches, chopping boards, knives and other utensils are required to be sanitised, whenever they are likely to be contaminated.

Benches can be sanitised by one of the following methods:

- Spray surfaces with a food grade sanitiser in accordance with the manufacturer's instructions.
- Spray surfaces with a bleach solution. The concentration of bleach required depends on the water temperature. The surface must be rinsed off with potable water prior to use.
- Spray surfaces with a 70% methylated spirits solution and allow to air dry. The amount of methylated spirits required to make up a 70% concentration depends on the concentration of methylated spirits purchased.

Chopping boards, knives and utensils can be sanitised by one of the following methods:

- Use a food grade sanitiser in rinse water in accordance with the manufacturer's instructions.
- Use a dishwasher capable of automatically sanitising utensils with heat. The dishwasher must not be able to operate if the water temperature required for sanitising is not reached.
- Soak items in bleach solution. The concentration of bleach required depends on the water temperature. The items must be rinsed with potable water prior to use.



In this issue...

- Sanitising of Food **Contact Surfaces**
- Temporary Food **Business Licences**
- Sick Employees
- Hand Wash Basins
- Food Safety Websites
- Stock Rotation
- Self-Service Buffets

Renewal of Food Business Licence

Ensure your Food Business Licence is renewed by 30 June 2018. Food businesses that do not renew their licence by 30 June 2018 will face financial and possible legal consequences.

Have you made any changes?

Making structural changes to your food premise may require an amendment to your food business licence. If you are planning to renovate please ensure you discuss your proposal with an **Environmental Health** Officer to determine if an application is required. Any renovation must comply with the Food Safety Standards.



Contact us

P: 07 4932 9000 or 1300 22 55 77

Environment and Public Health Unit E: enquiries@rrc.qld.gov.au W: www.rrc.ald.gov.au









Temporary Food Business Licences

Temporary events such as the Rockhampton River Festival have become very popular in the last few years. If your food business is proposing on holding a temporary food premise and the proposed activities meet the definition of a licensable food business, you will require a temporary food business licence. The food business licence may be issued for the duration of the event/s.

Individuals or businesses intending on applying for a temporary food business licence can access the Temporary Premises Fit-Out Guide on Council's website. The guide provides information on the design, construction and fit-out of temporary food premises, such as stall at markets or shows.

The Food Business Licence
Application Form can also be sourced from Council's website. To make an application you must complete the form and submit it to Council with the application fee and supporting information. Please ensure that you submit your application in plenty of time before the event. Under the Food Act 2006, Council has 30 days to assess the application which may be extended if further information is required.

Sick Employees

It is very important that staff who may be suffering from or carrying certain illnesses do not handle food or food contact surfaces, particularly if they are likely to contaminate food while they are working.

A person who has suffered from a gastro outbreak (e.g. vomiting and diarrhoea) should not take part in food handling duties and should not return to their usual food handling duties until 48 hours after their symptoms have ceased.

If you know or suspect that a food handler or anyone else handling food for the food business has an infected skin sore or discharge from their ears, nose or eyes, you must make sure the person takes all practicable measures such as covering with bandages to prevent the contamination of food. Ensure that any exposed food that has been potentially contaminated is thrown out.

Record Keeping

It is recommended that all food businesses keep records to show that the business has been taking reasonable measures to receive and produce safe and suitable food. These records can include checks undertaken on food that is delivered to the premises, temperature checks of food in storage, on display and cleaning and sanitising tasks that have been undertaken at the food business.

The records must:

- Be appropriate and legible,
- Indicate what the record relates to,
- Detail who made the record,
- The date and time the record was made,
- Any corrective action that may have been taken.

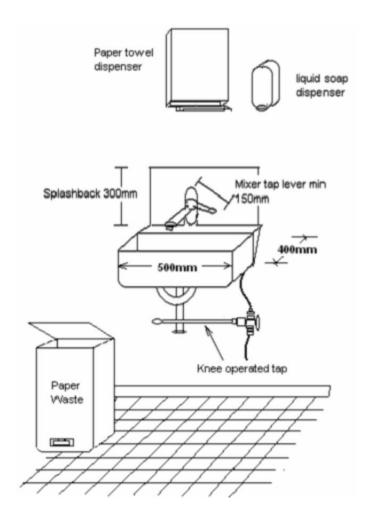
Examples of Record templates can be found in Council's Food Business Licensee Guide which is available on Council's website.

Temperature control record

Date &	Food Description	Visual	Temp °C	Corrective Action	Checked
Time	Description	Check		Action	Ву

Hand Wash Basins

All food businesses must provide hand washing facilities for food handling staff. These facilities should be located where they can be easily accessed by food handlers. Using the hand wash facilities for any purpose other than the washing of hands, arms and face is not permitted as it can cause cross contamination. The hand wash facilities must be provided with warm running water, soap and paper towels for drying hands. A common issue identified is that other equipment blocks access to hand wash facilities. If you intend to move or alter your hand washing facilities ensure that you discuss the proposed changes with an Environmental Health Officer prior to undertaking any works.



Food Safety Websites

Please see below for some useful websites on food safety and regulation of food businesses:

- Queensland Health: www.health.qld.qov.au/public-health/industry-environment/food-safety
- Standards Australia & New Zealand: www.foodstandards.gov.au
- Safe Food Queensland: www.safefood.gld.gov.au
- Food Safety Information Council: www.foodsafety.asn.au
- I'm Alert Food Safety: www.imalert.com.au