

food matters

Welcome to this bumper edition of the Bega Valley Shire Council Food Matters newsletter. Council looks forward to working with your business in promoting good food safety practices. This expanded edition features a focus on allergies, new training available specifically to help the food service sector, a look at thermometers, FSS certification and a reminder of how to apply the 2hr 4hr rule.

EHOs are available to give advice to businesses. Contact Councils Environmental Health Services on 02 6499 2222, email council@begavalley.nsw.gov.au or ask the EHO at your next inspection.

Menus, allergies and intolerances

Common ways things can go wrong. Know and communicate your cross contamination risks.

If you can't guarantee that you can prepare a strict allergy or intolerance free meal, don't claim that you can – it is better to say "Please advise staff if you have any specific dietary needs" rather than to claim something you cannot deliver (e.g. GF/egg free/dairy free/nut free).

This open conversation starter will enable you to explain your setup and the consumer can make an informed choice. An example may be a small take-away shop that only has one deep fryer. There is a possibility that cross-contamination may occur. You could tell your customer that you will do everything in your power to prepare a specific meal, but given the space constraints there is a small chance that there will be traces of other ingredients present in their meal.

In NSW food businesses must provide accurate information about food they are serving. This is especially important when dealing with food

Never promise something that you can't deliver. Explain the precautions you are taking and the status of your onsite facilities to the customer and let them decide for themselves.

allergies. Food businesses should only make claims about food where procedures are in place to validate the safety of the food for the consumer. For example when describing food as gluten/dairy/nut/egg free (either verbally or on menus) are you sure you have considered all potential cross contamination such as utensils, ingredients preparation areas and separation?

When dealing with allergies and intolerances the preparation and storage of food items needs to

be considered. Food ingredients as well as the preparation utensils and equipment that are used to prepare a meal must have had no contact with any other foods or preparation items that are used normally.

Food businesses that inaccurately identify food risk consumer health if they do not take these steps. This can be potentially life threatening.

Cooking equipment that is normally used for other food items must be thoroughly cleaned or have not been used previously. It is better to prepare a special diet meal in a separate frypan, rather than on the flat grill. Clean utensils and chopping boards should also be used in the preparation of special diets.

Potential cross-contamination risks can include:

- barbecues and char grills
- buffets or smorgasbords
- deep fryers
- dry storage containers that contain more than one ingredient

- flat grills
- leaning across ingredients.
- sandwich makers
- shared chopping boards, utensils, colanders and strainers
- splashing from one dish to another
- spreads (i.e. margarine)
- traces on hands, gloves, aprons, cloths, and equipment like knives, spoons, spatulas
- washing-up water

Both the customer and the food service business have responsibility in preventing an allergic/intolerance incident. A 2015 study by Coeliac Australia reported that for 62% of gluten free diners, fear of cross contamination prevents them from eating out while only 9% trusted a gluten free claim. To help combat this issue, Coeliac Australia has developed resources to assist food service providers in the preparation and service of gluten free meals including a best practice document Gluten Free Standard for Food Service Providers, an online training program as well as a gluten free accreditation program. For more information visit www.coeliac.org.au/food-industry

Additional resources see <http://www.foodauthority.nsw.gov.au/rp/allergies-intolerances>



Online food allergy training

The National Allergy Strategy has launched free online training for food service sector. The “All about allergens” training course is available via the National Allergy Strategy website – www.foodallergytraining.org.au and provides free access to training that is fast, easy and free. The comprehensive program details need to know information and is presented using videos and interactive activities. It also contains links to resources that can help you and your business.

Inspections and penalties

BVSC routinely inspects food businesses once per year. If a complaint is received or Council thinks you are a higher risk then you may be inspected more frequently. Visits are often educational as it has been shown that good food businesses are more likely to comply with food regulations and good practice guidance via education instead of

enforcement. Although if you cause a risk to public health or you are repeatedly failing in certain areas you could be closed down, or issued with a penalty notice or prosecuted.

Council EHOs use a graduated enforcement approach following the recommendations of the NSW Ombudsman and the NSW Food Authority.

REMEMBER

**IT IS DANGEROUS TO SLACKEN OFF
and EVERYONE HAS A CAMERA**

Food safety should be a routine part of your business, not based on when your next food inspection will be.



<http://www.barfblog.com/2017/07/everyone-has-a-camera-toronto-bakery-edition-disgusting-video-shows-mice-feeding-on-pastry/>

Thermometers

Does yours measure up?

During the routine inspections of food businesses across the Bega Valley one of the worrying trends noted by EHOs is a lack of use of appropriate thermometers. Since it is a requirement for all food businesses to ensure that all potentially hazardous food is stored at either less than 5C or above 60C at all times a thermometers should be used regularly throughout operation to ensure that these temperatures are being achieved.

Cooling and heating units will break down for a number of different reasons and the food business must ensure that the stored food is not held at a temperature that will compromise the safety of the food. It is not sufficient to rely solely on the thermometer built into the fridge, freezer or bain

marie as these measure the air temperature in the unit and not the food stored within.

When staff are asked for the thermometer during routine food inspection they should be able to locate it immediately (within reason), with the unit having working batteries and being able to accurately measure temperature +/- 1C ([digital probe]).

While it is acceptable to use infrared thermometers there must be a digital probe thermometer onsite. Be aware that analogue thermometers (needle on a gauge) commonly used in ovens are not accurate enough and will not be accepted as meeting the food safety requirement.



All probe thermometers must be cleaned and sanitised after each use to prevent cross contamination of foods for sale.

Blitz on LPG in hospitality

SafeWork NSW has announced a blitz of restaurants, cafes and bakeries using LPG cylinders after a Marrickville baker was critically injured in June 2017.

The 32-year-old baker suffered serious burns to his face, neck and arms following an explosion at the bakery when he attempted to light a portable gas burner.

SafeWork NSW is conducting inspections of food businesses across the state in an effort to prevent further incidents and improve public safety.

SafeWork's Director of Hazardous Chemical Facilities and Safety Management Audits, Meagan McCool, said portable gas appliances presented many risks and they should only be used in accordance with manufacturers instructions.

"All portable gas appliances must be certified in accordance with Australian Standards and approved by a certifier accredited by NSW Fair Trading," Ms McCool said.

"The use of this equipment indoors puts workers and customers at risk of fire, explosion and asphyxia.

"Businesses should only use them in well-ventilated areas, regularly check for leaks and avoid storing them indoors."

Ms McCool said SafeWork inspectors had found many businesses were cutting corners on safety by importing portable gas appliances from overseas.

"These imported appliances do not comply with Australian Standards and have not been approved by a certifier accredited by NSW Fair Trading," she said.

"SafeWork is acting now to stop more workers getting injured and prevent customers lives being put at risk."

SafeWork will visit restaurants, cafés, and outdoor events that use portable LPG cylinders to check they are complying with work health and safety laws, and provide safety advice for their safe use and storage.

Call 13 10 50 or visit www.safework.nsw.gov.au

Fair Trading : Lunchbox Cookers suspended from sale
http://www.fairtrading.nsw.gov.au/ftw/Consumers/Product_and_service_safety/Lunchbox_cookers.page?#Table_of_products_suspended_from_sale_as_at_10_March_2015

Video - Safety first: Mobile and portable gas appliances <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gouW0J1GJzI&feature=youtu.be>



Free Online Food Safety Training

Council is assisting food businesses to meet the skills and knowledge requirements of the Food Safety Standards by providing free access to the "I'mAlert" training tool.

Completion of the "I'mAlert" program will assist food handlers in developing the skills and knowledge required to ensure food is handled in a safe and hygienic manner. The program is easy to use with its entertaining presentation and interactive tasks and quizzes.

A printable training acknowledgement is available on completion for your records.

Visit www.begavalley.imalert.com.au

Sanitising...

Getting it right... it's more than just cleaning!

Sanitising kitchen equipment and food preparation surfaces is essential in preventing the growth of harmful pathogens that may cause food poisoning. Sanitising is also a requirement of the Food Standards Code.

You can sanitise with temperature (dishwasher) or with the right chemicals (food grade sanitisers).

Council EHOs have noticed that many food businesses are either not sanitising or not using food grade sanitisers correctly.

To effectively sanitise a food contact surface using chemicals, a number of general rules should be followed:

- **Always clean the surface before sanitising.** Sanitisers do not work on unclean surfaces. If there is dirt, grease or food matter remaining on the surface, pathogens beneath will be protected from the sanitiser.
- **Follow the manufacturers instructions.** There are many brands and products used for sanitising in a food business available from commercial chemical suppliers. Dilution rates, contact times and safety instructions vary, the products won't work unless you follow the instructions.
- **Fragrances aren't your friend.** Check your labels, if the product you are using is 'scented' does it say 'food grade sanitiser'? If you are using a bleach dilution it must be unscented bleach.

See the full Cleaning and Sanitising in Food Businesses instructions at www.foodauthority.nsw.gov.au and search 'sanitising'.

Are you doing it right?

FSS Certification – can you produce a current certificate?

A review of recent inspections identified that many premises were not able to produce current Food Safety Supervisor (FSS) certificates at time of inspection.

Many certificates had expired others were just not onsite.

A FSS must be appointed if a food business prepares and serves ready-to-eat potentially hazardous foods that is not sold in the original manufacturers packaging.

If you are not sure if your food business needs an FSS ring Council and check.

BE WARNED – Failure to appoint an FSS or failure to display a valid certificate will result in enforcement action.



Barfblog

Australia has an egg problem

<http://www.barfblog.com/2017/07/australia-still-has-an-egg-problem-wa-salmonella-infections-explode1500-sick/>

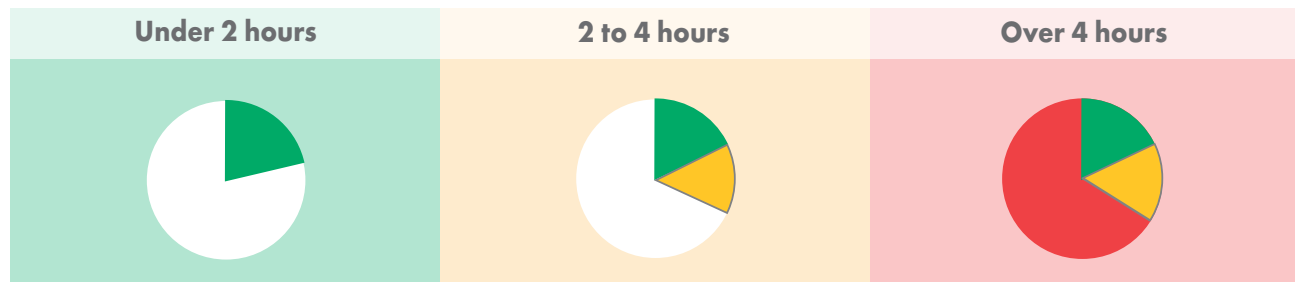


FOOD SAFETY FACT SHEET

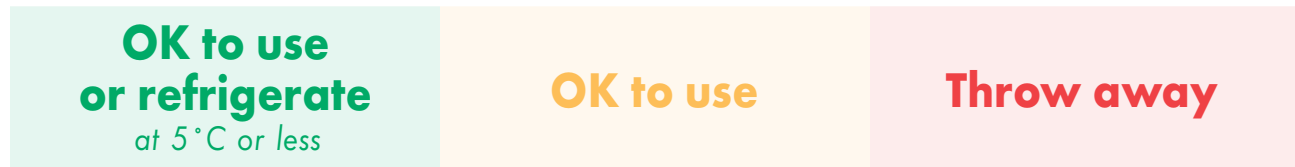
2 HOUR 4 HOUR GUIDE EXPLAINED

The 2 Hour / 4 Hour guide below tells you how long freshly prepared potentially hazardous foods*, foods like cooked meat and foods containing meat, dairy products, prepared fruits and vegetables, cooked rice and pasta, and cooked or processed foods containing eggs, can be safely held at temperatures in the danger zone; that is between 5°C and 60°C. It takes time for food poisoning bacteria to grow to unsafe levels. Apply the following time limits to ensure these risky type foods remain safe to eat:

Total time between 5°C and 60°C



What you should do



The total time includes all the time the food has been at room temperature, for example during delivery, preparation and transportation.

Example

A sandwich is freshly prepared at 12 noon and placed in a non-refrigerated display case:-

(1) can keep the sandwich out of refrigeration for up to 2 hours (until 2p.m.) and then refrigerate and bring out again later in the day, say 4p.m. (not to go back into the refrigerator for later use after this point). If not used by 6p.m. (4 hours out of temperature control in total) then throw it away,

OR

(2) can keep the sandwich out of temperature control (refrigeration) for up to 4 hours straight – until 4p.m. – then need to throw it away.

* Foods that are not potentially hazardous and can thus be stored out of temperature control are foods like dried fruit, salted dried meats, hard cheeses, dried pasta and other dried foods, breads, unopened canned and bottled food, spreads and sauces such as tomato and soy sauce.