

Food Matters in Bassendean



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Town of Bassendean food safety newsletter

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Note from the editor

Dear Readers,

Welcome to the second issue of our newsletter. Thank you for all your positive feedback regarding our first issue.

In this newsletter, you will find many interesting articles and you will also learn about I'm ALERT, the free Online Food Safety Training Program which is available on the Town of Bassendean's website. We strongly encourage you to undertake this free training and also use it as a training tool for your staff. We hope you find this food safety newsletter helpful and enjoyable.

If you have any questions that you would like addressed in the newsletter, please call the Town's Health section on (08) 9377 8000 or email: mail@bassendean.wa.gov.au

I'm ALERT: free online Food Safety Training Program

The Town of Bassendean is providing you with FREE and unlimited access to an exciting new product that will assist you and your food handlers in gaining valuable skills and knowledge in food safety and hygiene, which will help to ensure safe and suitable food is produced at your food business.

This program is presented in an interactive, easy to follow and entertaining format and includes the ability for the user to print off an acknowledgement form and a certificate upon completion of the program that can be kept as a part of your staff records.

This training program will assist food business managers in ensuring all staff are trained in this important area and thereby reducing any risk of food-borne illness resulting from poor food handling practices.

It is recommended that all food handlers within your food business take part in this training. This is a great opportunity to provide all your staff with training that would otherwise cost your business money and a great deal more in time.

To access the training program please visit:
www.bassendean.imalert.com.au



FREE Online Food Safety Training

Now available through the Town of Bassendean Website.

The Town of Bassendean takes food hygiene within our town very seriously. All food businesses have obligations and the Town of Bassendean is assisting food businesses to meet these obligations by providing free access to this exciting new training tool.

There is a high demand for training within the food sector. This training will assist food handlers in developing the required skills and knowledge to ensure food is handled in a safe and hygienic manner.

The program is easy to follow, includes an entertaining presentation as well as interactive quizzes. A training acknowledgement form can be printed upon completion and be kept as a part of your staff records.

Visit www.bassendean.imalert.com.au to conduct the training now.



A couple of cockroaches are okay? ... No way!

Lately we have noticed an increase in warnings and Improvement Orders being issued for non-compliances in relation to pest control in food businesses. The presence of insects and vermin in food premises is not acceptable.

An effective pest control program must be implemented in your premises, which include preventing pests from entering the premises, eradicating any pest activity that may be present and preventing harbourage. This is a requirement of the Food Safety Standards—which means, it is law. The Town recommends that all food businesses keep records of their pest control program. To assist you with this, we have enclosed the 'Pest Control for Food Businesses' information sheet. Use this sheet (make copies first) to record your pest control program or you may wish to put together your own. Either way this is the best way to demonstrate you have an effective program in place and to keep on top of your pest control.



Food poisoning and cross-contamination

Cross-contamination is one of the main causes of food poisoning. It can happen when bacteria from the surface of raw meat, poultry and raw vegetables with visible dirt (such as unwashed potatoes) are transferred onto ready-to-eat foods, such as salads, bread, fruit or cooked meats.



These bacteria on the raw food are killed once the food is cooked, but ready-to eat foods usually get eaten without further cooking.

Hands, chopping boards, knives and other cooking implements can cause cross-contamination. Cooking utensils and chopping boards need to be carefully washed with hot water and detergent.

Hands need to be washed:

- before touching or eating food;
- after touching raw meat, fish, chicken or unwashed vegetables;
- after using the toilet;
- after touching a pet; and
- after blowing your nose or smoking.

Incorrectly storing raw food in the fridge by allowing contact with ready-to-eat foods or allowing raw meat juices to drip onto cooked foods, fruit and other ready-to eat foods are also causes of cross-contamination.

Raw food, such as meat, poultry or fish, should be stored at the bottom of the fridge or in a container to prevent meat and juices dripping onto other foods. Remember to make sure that it cannot directly touch other foods.

Food Law Information

Fines are here to stay...

The Town's Health Services can issue on the spot fines for breaches of food legislation.

Under the *Food Act 2008*, Health Officers are able to issue 'on the spot fines' (infringements) to food businesses if they breach requirements of the *Food Act*, *Food Regulations* or the *Food Standards Code*. If the premise is unclean, in need of repairs and where skills and knowledge of safe food handling and hygiene are not being applied, a fine may be issued to a food business. Fines can also be issued for incorrect labelling, not registering your food business with the Town, and changing your food business activities without notifying the Town.

It is hoped that the need to issue infringements does not occur, however, in cases where food businesses consistently do the 'wrong thing' or where unsafe or unsuitable food is prepared, or there is a risk to public health and safety, infringement notices will be issued.

Recent prosecutions in WA— Department of Health website

SINCE distributing our last newsletter, the following successful prosecutions of food businesses have occurred in the Perth metro area.

- Bakery in the City of Belmont – fine and costs of \$78,000
- Restaurant in City of Subiaco – fine and costs of \$23,490.70
- Take-away in City of Stirling – fine and costs of \$ 51, 537.50
- Restaurant in the City of Gosnells – fine and costs of \$26,125.70



For more information you may visit
www.public.health.wa.gov.au/3/1707/2/publication_of_names_of_offenders_list.pm

Are your food suppliers registered?

FROM TIME to time we find that some food businesses prepare food for sale to the public in unapproved premises or at home.

**All foods offered for sale must be prepared
in registered food premises.**

Our kitchens at home are not set up for commercial food preparation and may be a potential source of contamination to the food. Other food safety issues such as the cooling of food and transportation of the food are also of concern.

You should be checking that all the food products entering your premises are from registered food businesses.

If any of your suppliers are not a registered food business, not only are they committing an offence, but you are too for accepting food from them.

Reminder... a few more to go
All businesses preparing food for vulnerable populations (hospitals, aged care, meals on wheels, respite care, child care centres and the like) are required to have a food safety program that complies with the Standard 3.2.1 implemented.
If you haven't submitted your food safety plan in to the Town of Bassendean to date, please do so as it is way overdue!

Skills and knowledge: a legal requirement

UNDER the *Food Safety Standards* owners of food businesses are responsible for making sure that people who handle food in their business, and the people who supervise this work, have the skills and knowledge they need to handle food safely.

Skills: Your staff and their supervisors must be able to do their work in ways that ensure that your business produces safe food.

Knowledge: Your staff and their supervisors must know about issues associated with food safety and safe food handling practices that are relevant to your business and the jobs that they do.

How do I make sure that staff have appropriate skills and knowledge?

Formal training is not necessarily required. There are many different things you can do and factors you can take into account to ensure that staff have the skills and knowledge they need for their work. Examples are:

- 'in house' training;
- providing staff with relevant food safety documents and information sheets to read such as this newsletter, access to food law websites etc;
- operating rules that set out the responsibilities of your food handlers and supervisors;
- carrying out the 'I'm ALERT' On-line Food Safety Training Program (see front page).

How can I comply with the skills and knowledge requirement?

Businesses that already ensure that their food handlers have safe food handling skills and knowledge, supervise the work of their staff, and regularly remind them about safe food handling practices, should find it easy to comply with the skills and knowledge requirement.



Bacteria/microbiological food sampling

OVER THE next 6 months, the Town's Health Section will be carrying out a number of bacterial (microbiological) food sampling surveys. The purpose of the sampling surveys is to ensure that food prepared and sold within the Town of Bassendean is being handled safely, stored under correct temperature control, not contaminated and safe to eat.

Already, the Town has conducted a Sandwich Survey, where pre-prepared sandwiches were purchased and tested for bacteria levels. Other sampling surveys which we hope to carry out for bacteria levels include:

- deli meats;
- sushi rolls;
- cream and custard products;
- bain-marie foods (i.e. pies, sausages, dim-sims etc); and
- ready-to-eat foods, including pre-prepared meals and cook-to-order meals.

So, there is a very good chance that we will be popping in over the next 6 months to conduct some sampling at your food business.

So you make your own mayo...

FOOD POISONING outbreaks linked to eggs have been associated with foods that are uncooked or lightly cooked such as:

- sauces and spreads (e.g. mayonnaise, aioli, hollandaise and egg butter);
- desserts made without a cooking step such as cheesecake, tiramisu and mousse;
- lightly cooked foods such as custard, meringue, cold soufflé, fried ice cream, some ice cream and gelato made on the premises;
- savoury dishes such as steak tartare, Japanese sukiyaki and Korean yuk hwe;
- soft poached, runny or coddled eggs.

Why be careful

Most shell eggs in Australia are clean and free from bacteria but sometimes harmful bacteria can be found inside the egg, which is more likely if the shell is cracked. Some cracks are obvious but even hairline cracks where the shell membrane looks intact can be a problem.

Bacteria can also be found on the egg, which is more probable if the shell is dirty with yolk, albumen, soil, feathers and faecal or other matter stuck to the outside.

Handle eggs correctly:

- **Keep eggs refrigerated.**
- **Use finished egg products immediately or keep refrigerated.**
- **Wash and dry hands before and after handling eggs.**
- **Use a utensil or clean hands to separate egg yolks and whites, not the shell.**
- **Keep kitchen surfaces, utensils and bowls clean and dry.**
- **Use a clean container for every batch; do not top up sauces, mayonnaise or egg butter.**
- **Keep raw egg ingredients away from ready-to-eat food.**
- **Understand the safe storage life of products.**
- **Have your process and recipe checked by an expert food technologist.**

Cook food thoroughly

Cook eggs until the white is firm and yolk begins to thicken. The centre of thoroughly cooked foods with shell egg ingredients should reach at least 72°C.