



# FOOD MATTERS

WINTER 2019

SHIRE OF  
**MANJIMUP**

## Welcome to the Shire's first edition of Food Matters

*Food Matters* is the Shire's new food safety newsletter which will be published every three months.

The newsletter is primarily designed to assist food business owners and staff understand their legal responsibilities under the *Food Act 2008* and the Food Standards Code. It will also provide new and interesting information about current topics.

Clean premises and proper food handling practices are essential for the good health of our community. Given the serious implications that food poisoning can have on the community and our businesses, we hope that each edition of our newsletter provides plenty of useful advice on safe food practices.

If there are any topics you would like us to cover, we welcome your ideas and feedback via email at [info@manjimup.wa.gov.au](mailto:info@manjimup.wa.gov.au)

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## A word from your Environmental Health Services Team...

As the weather cools down, it's a great time to go through your entire food preparation and storage areas to have a good de-clutter and clean. Try looking at things with a fresh set of eyes. Focus on those "hard to reach" areas. If items are not essential for food preparation or storage, find a new home for them. They make it difficult to clean and increase the risk of insects and rodents!

Think your kitchen is already clean enough? Grab your camera and with the flash turned 'on', take some photos of those hard to reach areas i.e. underneath cooking equipment, the back of storage shelving, inside extraction canopy gutters, etc. **You might be shocked to see what is really lurking around!**

If you have any questions regarding the inspection process, please contact the Shire's Environmental Health Services Team on (08) 9771 7777 who will be happy to assist.

# All About Food Allergies

Australia has one of the highest allergy rates in the world. For every 100 customers using your business, two may have an allergy.

Anaphylaxis, the most severe life-threatening form of allergic reaction, leads to deaths of between 10 and 20 Australians every year.

**Food allergy is a serious issue, but with an allergy management plan in your business, the risks can be minimised**

As there is no cure for food allergies, **strict avoidance is essential.**

Food businesses play an important role in assisting to manage food allergies. Addressing a customer's allergy request is not only a **legal requirement**, it is also good for business and building customer loyalty.

When a customer informs a server of a food allergy, the server should:

- ◆ **ASK** the chef or manager if the allergy-causing food is in, or came into contact with the dish ordered.
- ◆ **TELL** the customer what the chef or manager said.

**NEVER GUESS.....**

**ALWAYS ASK QUESTIONS!**

Tools to reduce the risk of allergic reactions in your food business can be found at <https://allergyfacts.org.au/>



## Avoiding Cross-Contamination

Educating food handlers about cross-contamination has always been about separating raw and cooked foods. However, the same principles of avoiding cross-contamination apply to the handling of allergens in your kitchen:

- ◆ **Separate Foods** during preparation and storage.
- ◆ **Wash hands** between handling different foods.
- ◆ **Clean Equipment** between different foods.
- ◆ **Label** all food in storage.

Remember that for some people just a trace amount of the offending food can cause a life threatening allergic reaction!



Don't forget about the food additives you use as these may also contain traces of allergens.

**Food prepared for a customer should ALWAYS be prepared fresh**

**“Never just remove the offending allergen from a prepared dish”**

## The Importance of Hand Basins

### How often do you wash your hands?

If your hand basin is full of thawing meat or stacked equipment, we would guess it's not that often.

### Washing your hands is one of the most important ways of preventing the spread of infectious diseases

Poor hygiene and unwashed hands contribute to many food-related illness outbreaks. Hands can transfer germs from contaminated raw meat, eggs and poultry which can potentially contaminate other food.

It is just as important to thoroughly dry your hands with disposable paper towels as it is to wash them. Effective drying removes the moisture that allows germs to transfer.

Whether a customer returns, heavily depends on what they see and how they feel after their meal. **Cost and taste amount to nothing if the customer gets sick!**



## Cleaning and Sanitising

According to the Foods Standards Code, a food business must ensure that eating and drinking utensils and the food contact surfaces of equipment are in a clean and sanitary condition.

A 'clean and sanitary' condition means the condition of a surface or utensil is clean, and has applied to it heat or chemicals so that the number of micro-organisms present has been reduced to a safe level.

Dishwashers that reach temperatures in excess of 77°C are capable of sanitising equipment. If a dishwasher of this capability is not available, a chemical food grade sanitiser is an alternative.



Food grade sanitisers are made specifically for the food industry. It is important to ensure that both utensils and the food contact surfaces of fixtures, fittings and equipment are first cleaned with detergent and warm water, and then sanitised.

### What needs to be sanitised?

- ◆ **Eating and drinking utensils** including glasses, cups, plates and cutlery.
- ◆ **Equipment containing food contact surfaces used for ready to eat foods** (i.e. food preparation benches, chopping boards and knives, meat slicers and mincers, blenders and stick/stab mixers and re-useable piping bags).

When using a food grade sanitiser it is important to follow the manufacturer's specific instructions and directions, which may include special contact times and dilution rates.



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## It's time to renew your food business registration

It's that time of year again. Invoices have been issued for payment of your annual food business registration fee. This annual registration is required under Section 113 of the *Food Act 2008* to notify the Shire of any changes to your food business.

**Your prompt assistance in paying your annual registration fee and notifying the Shire of any changes to your business is appreciated.**

Please note that failure to pay the required fee by the due date may result in de-registration of your food business.

## Recent Prosecutions in WA

Since the beginning of 2019 there have been a number of prosecutions of food premises through the courts including:

### **An Indian restaurant in the City of Fremantle:**

Failing to maintain the premises and equipment to a standard of cleanliness.

Penalty \$25,000 plus court costs.

### **A bakery in the City of Gosnells:**

Sale of unsuitable food.

Penalty \$10,000 plus court costs.

### **An IGA in the City of Rockingham:**

Selling food after its use-by date.

Penalty \$45,000 plus court costs.



## **FOOD SAFETY IS YOUR BUSINESS FOOD SAFETY IS YOUR RESPONSIBILITY**

The Food Safety Standards place obligations on food businesses to produce food that is safe and suitable to eat. Food handlers are also required to have skills and knowledge of food safety and hygiene matters.

With more and more people eating out on a regular basis, food poisoning is on the increase. Therefore it makes sense for food businesses to protect themselves by making sure their products are as safe as possible.

FoodSafe Online Food Handler Training has been developed by Environmental Health Australia for individuals and is an ideal first step towards safer food. It is an interactive food handler training program and is available **free of charge** to all food businesses, community groups and residents within the Shire of Manjimup. The program is fully online with training videos and questions and a certificate is issued upon completion of the course.

To access the free FoodSafe Online Food Handler Training please visit

<https://www.manjimup.wa.gov.au/foodsafeline>

