

Food Safety Guidelines for Charities & Community Organisations



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WHAT DO YOU HAVE TO DO?

There are three (3) main requirements for temporary food business operating in the Hawkesbury City Area.

1. Read this booklet and make sure you and all your food handlers comply with all the regulations.
2. Contact the Environment & Waste Branch for the Temporary Food Premises and Food Vending Vehicles registration form and return to Council in order to be put on a register. Make sure the registered number is kept and retained on the food premises during operation within the Hawkesbury City local government area.

This will also involve paying an annual fee.

N.B. You can claim exemption from the fee if you can provide evidence of being a charity, non-profit organisation/community group or incorporated body.

3. Business involved in temporary events are now required to notify on a state-wide notification database for the NSW Health Department of your attendance at events.

Please refer to Section 1 - Notification.

AN INTRODUCTION TO THE NEW FOOD SAFETY STANDARDS

Charities and community organisations play an important role in our community, and fundraising events are a major contribution to the work of the community. But no one wants people to get sick from the food they eat at these events.

In Australia, the food law places many responsibilities on the proprietor of a food business. If you are the organiser of an event or an official of a charity or community organisation that is selling food, you need to be aware of these responsibilities.

If you understand your legal responsibilities and plan your events properly, complying with the law is straightforward.

What the law says

The Food Safety Standards, which apply to Australia only, include requirements for the handling, storage, transport and display of food. The Standards are in the process of being adopted by each State and Territory and, when adopted, will specify requirements that are consistent across Australia for the first time. A copy of the Food Safety Standards is available from the ANZFA website at www.anzfa.gov.au.

In the Standards, a food business is identified as a business, enterprise or activity (other than primary food production) that involves:

- (a) the handling of food for sale, or
- (b) the sale of food,

regardless of whether the business, enterprise or activity concerned is of a commercial, charitable or community nature or whether it involves the handling or sale of food on one occasion only.

This definition of a 'food business' includes all food activities involved in fundraising, including preparation of the food before it is sold. The definition of 'sale' covers fundraising activities. Food has been sold even if you just ask for a donation.

Temporary Food Stall Categories

The National Code for Food Vending Vehicles and Temporary Food Premises establishes four categories of temporary food premises. A temporary food stall will fall into one of the following categories.

Category 1: Temporary One (1) Day Food Stalls

A temporary one-day food stall may either be;

~~is~~ a demountable covered stall, which is approved for use as a one (1) day food stall only,

~~///~~ a demountable open stall which is approved for use as a one (1) day food stall only.

A one day food stall must consist of the roof and sides covered with plastic sheeting, vinyl or other approved material. Where a one-day food stall is erected on unsealed ground, a suitable waterproof material must be laid over the ground area of the stall.

Open food stalls consisting of tables only or trestles, must be used only for the sale of factory pre-packaged food in hermetically sealed containers (e.g. canned or bottle soft drinks, canned foodstuffs). Refer to Decision Tree.

Category 2: Temporary up to three (3) days continuous operation

Mobile food stalls complying with the food Vending Vehicles Code only are permitted.

Category 3: Temporary up to one (1) month continuous operation

Mobile food stalls complying with the Food Vending Vehicles Code only are permitted. To operate under this category the mobile food stall must comply with the following;

- ~~///~~ The stall must be either connected temporarily to the sewer/sullage tank or to another approved waste disposal method, have power and other required services and facilities.
- ~~///~~ Cold water under mains pressure must be made available to a food vending vehicle.
- ~~///~~ The use of inbuilt or portable generators for the provision of power is not allowed.
- ~~///~~ Adequate facilities must be provided for the storage of garbage and arrangements must be made for the regular removal and disposal of garbage generated inside the stall or outside the stall.
- ~~///~~ Suitable garbage containers must be provided near each food-vending vehicle for the public to dispose of used takeaway food containers.

Refer to Decision Tree for requirements.

Category 4: Temporary Food Premises Within Buildings

This category is for temporary kitchens and the like that are set up in conjunction with indoor exhibitions or trade fairs. The standards of construction and facilities must not be less than required for a mobile food-vending vehicle.

How to use this guide

The following decision path on the back page of this guide leads you through the different types of events. Next to each question is a list headings containing the information that you need to consider for your activity. The headings are:

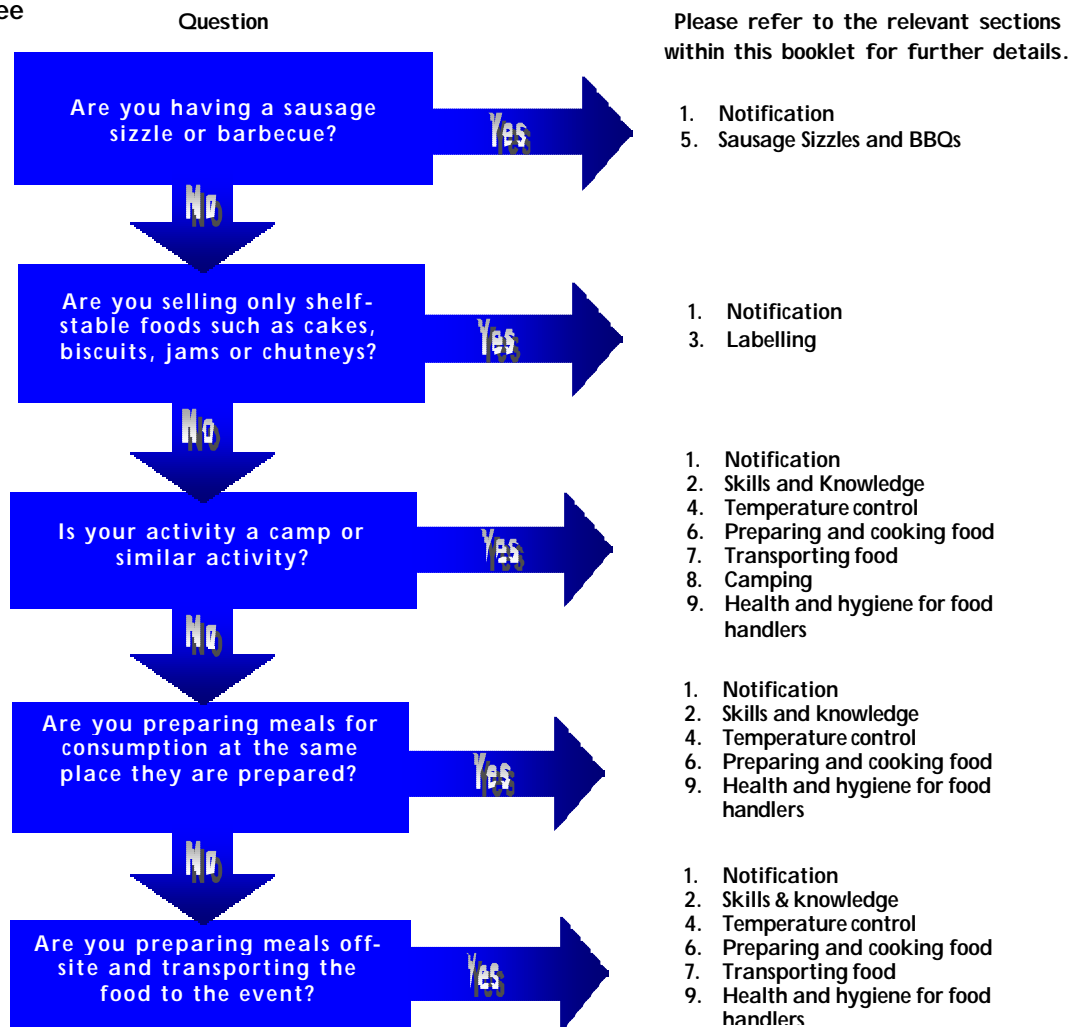
1. Notification
2. Skills and knowledge
3. Labelling
4. Temperature control
5. Sausage sizzles and barbecues
6. Preparing and cooking food
7. Transporting food
8. Camping
9. Health and hygiene for food handlers

The event organiser should read the requirements that are relevant to the type of event being held, and should ensure that the people helping with the event also read them.

Checklist to organise Events

Checklist	
It is very easy to forget to do things when you are busy trying to organise events. If you tick the boxes of this checklist for each activity you will be less likely to miss important jobs.	
Event : <input type="text"/>	Date : <input type="text"/>
Have you...	Yes No
/ decided which activity on the decision path covers the event?	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>
/ notified your enforcement agency about the event?	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>
/ identified all volunteers participating in the event?	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>
/ provided volunteers with the appropriate information?	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>
/ checked that hand washing facilities will be provided?	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>
/ checked that drinkable water will be available at the site or an adequate supply will be transported to the site?	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>
/ checked whether power or gas will be available (if needed)?	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>
/ determined how to dispose of waste water and rubbish?	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>
/ checked that premises and temporary stalls are clean and appropriate for the activity being undertaken?	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>
/ checked that adequate temperature control equipment will be available?	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>
/ checked that a thermometer will be available if potentially hazardous foods will be handled?	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>
Talk to your local Environmental Health Officers if you have any concerns.	
If you have answered NO to any question, you need to consider what can be done to ensure that your charity or community organisation meets the Food Safety Standards.	

Decision Tree



1. NOTIFICATION

All food businesses are required under the new National Food Standards to notify the appropriate enforcement agency in their area of certain information associated with the operation of the business.

Q. Why do I have to notify?

A. The national notification system is proposed to assist in a number of important food safety issues including:-

- /// Food safety emergencies such as food recalls.
- /// Informing all business of relevant legislation changes and compliance requirements.
- /// Determining how many and what type of food business there are in New South Wales and where each is located.
- /// Determining the risk classification of each business based on established parameters.

Q. Who is the "appropriate enforcement agency"?

A. In New South Wales the appropriate enforcement agency is the NSW Health Department.

Q. Who is required to notify?

A. All food businesses including home industries; chemists; cinemas; corner stores; food transporters; caterers; video shops; petrol stations; public swimming pools etc, in addition to temporary or infrequent events such as festivals, fairs, markets and fetes.

Q. How do I notify?

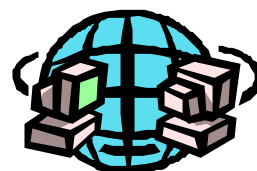
A. The Notification and Food Safety Internet System (NAFSIS) is an Internet application which can be accessed via the website www.foodnotify.nsw.gov.au.

Q. What information is required?

A. Contact details for your business including the address; trading name, contact person, telephone number, the type and size of the business in terms of staff and the food handled, provided or transported as well as specific questions about the groups of people to whom the food item/s are sold.

Q. What arrangements exist for a business which does not have a computer or Internet access?

A. Free Internet access is available for library members and visitors by appointment, at both Hawkesbury City Council's Libraries (Windsor Library hours are 10am-7pm Monday to Friday, 9am-1pm Saturday, and 2pm-5pm Sunday. Richmond Library hours are 9:30am - 6pm Monday to Friday, and 9am - 1pm Saturday). Alternatively, commercial outlets such as an Internet café can be used or by arranging for your accountant to complete the notification on your behalf.



Q. When does the Notification period begin?

A. The notification period commenced on 24 February 2002. Existing business have three (3) months in which to register, while a new business is required to notify immediately.

Q. Do I need to register each year?

A. No. A once only notification is required unless the type of business or ownership details change.

Q. Can I register at Council Offices?

A. No. Business operators are encouraged to register online at www.foodnotify.nsw.gov.au. Alternatively, Internet access can be gained at Councils libraries or at an Internet café or by arranging for your accountant to notify on your behalf.

Q. Do I get a notification number?

A. Yes.

Q. What happens if the type of business changes?

A. The business operator is required to update the information provided if circumstances change, for example, a takeaway food shop becomes a restaurant or the ownership contact details, such as address or telephone number, changes.

Q. What if I sell the business?

A. The new business operator is required to notify the NSW Health Department.

Q. How much will it cost?

A. Online registrations do not incur any charge at this stage.

Q. Are there any exemptions?

A. Yes. Businesses already licensed with Safefood NSW and activities associated with primary industries are exempt as well as charities.

Q. Is the information confidential?

A. Information provided by business operators to the Notification and Food Safety Internet System will be made available to the local Council, in each case by way of a confidentiality agreement, which binds the Council from the unlawful disclosure of such information.

More information:

Further information may be obtained by contacting the NSW Health Department on either (02) 9816 0268 or (02) 9816 0578.

2. SKILLS AND KNOWLEDGE

The Food Safety Standards require proprietors of food businesses to ensure that food handlers and supervisors of food handlers have the skills and knowledge they need to handle food safely.

This means that food handlers and supervisors must have the 'skills' to do those tasks that are necessary to ensure the safety of the food being handled and 'knowledge' of food safety and hygiene matters. For example, a food handler who is responsible for cooling cooked food must have the knowledge that the food must be cooled within a certain time to ensure it remains safe and the skills to do this (for example, by placing the food in shallow containers for cooling).

However, charities and community organisations are exempt from this requirement if:

- ✂ there is no personal financial gain, that is, all the moneys raised are used for charitable or community purposes; **and**
- ✂ the food sold is shelf-stable (for example, biscuits, cakes without cream, jams or chutneys); or
- ✂ the food is consumed immediately after thorough cooking (for example, sausages sold straight from the barbecue).

This means that in the above circumstances the event organiser does **not** need to ensure that each food handler has the skills and knowledge to handle food safely. However, these food handlers must still comply with the health and hygiene requirements of the Food Safety Standards.

If the exemption does not apply, the event organiser should ensure that all food handlers and supervisors have the skills and knowledge they need to handle food safely. The exemption does not apply if the activity involves:

- ✂ selling potentially hazardous foods that have not been cooked, such as salads or cream cakes; or
- ✂ selling potentially hazardous foods that are not served immediately after cooking, such as when food is pre-cooked and then heated for sale.

How to ensure your food handlers and supervisors have the appropriate skills and knowledge

The event organiser should first determine if the food handlers and supervisors already have the skills and knowledge, as some may have previously received food safety training. If training is needed, the event organiser will need to work out the best way of providing this training.

Food handlers and supervisors are not required to attend formal training courses. However, Hawkesbury City Council runs a free food handling seminar four times a year. Contact details are located at the rear of this booklet. Other trained can be obtained by:

- ✂ attending 'in-house' training programs;
- ✂ reading food safety and hygiene information (such as this booklet);
- ✂ following food safety procedures that relate to the activities of the charitable or community organisation.

The event organiser can check whether food handlers and supervisors have the required knowledge and understand their obligations by talking to them or asking questions. Assessing skills is much harder but if, for example, food handlers are seen to do the right thing at all times when preparing food, it is reasonable to assume that they have the necessary skills. Event organisers should consider whether:

- ✂ all food handlers know how the business expects food to be handled;
- ✂ food handlers understand their health and hygiene responsibilities (Refer to *Health and hygiene for food handlers*);
- ✂ there is someone in the organisation who is responsible for ensuring that food handlers handle food safely; and
- ✂ the necessary equipment is available so that food handlers can handle food safely, for example handwashing facilities.

3. LABELLING

When new food legislation comes fully into effect from December 2002, food sold at events that raise money solely for charitable or community causes and not for personal financial gain will no longer need to be labelled.

The only exception to this is if you are selling royal jelly or a food that contains royal jelly [\[i\]](#) as an ingredient. If you are, a warning statement [\[ii\]](#) must be included on the label.

Although you do not need to label your food, there are circumstances where the law requires you to provide information about the foods you sell, if you are asked. For example, if someone asks you whether a food contains a particular ingredient that may cause an allergic reaction, you must provide this person with this information.

Ingredients that may cause allergic reactions are listed at the end of this segment. If the food being sold contains any of these ingredients, somebody at the sales point should know and be able to provide the information when asked, or a sign could be included where the food is displayed. An ingredient list on the label makes this task easier.

Although charities and community organisations are not required by law to label food, they may wish to provide labels on their products to enable the buyer to identify the food, its ingredients and where it was made. If you do decide to label the food, read the section 'How to label food' .

There are also other circumstances when information may need to be provided. Before the event takes place, the organiser of the charitable or community event should ask their local council or health authority whether any of these circumstances apply. [\[iii\]](#)

Why label food?

Food labels identify the food and provide information to help people decide whether they are able or want to eat the food. It also helps the event organiser know what food is being sold, what it contains and where it has come from.

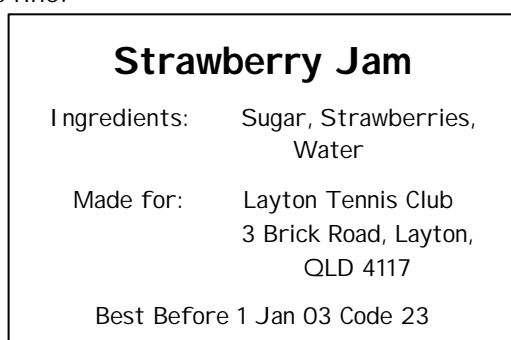
How to label food

If you wish to label your food, it is recommended that the label includes:

- ~~///~~ a description of the food, for example ' strawberry jam' or ' chocolate cake' ;
- ~~///~~ the name and address of the person or company who made the food, so that the maker can be traced if there is any problem with the food. A street address is needed, as a post office box cannot be traced;
- ~~///~~ a list of ingredients;
- ~~///~~ a ' best before' date to indicate how long the food will keep; and
- ~~///~~ any special storage conditions, for example ' keep refrigerated' .

Your State or Territory' s government department that regulates weights and measures may also require the weight of the product to be included.

A simple handwritten label is fine.



If you prepare the product yourself you will know what is in it. If you have used a packet mix write the ingredients from the packet on your label. Remember to include any other ingredients you may have added, such as eggs.

If the event organiser wishes to identify each maker of food without including their specific details, he or she can use a single address for all products and a separate code for each maker, such as Layton Tennis Club, 3 Brick Road, Layton, Qld 4117, Code 23, as used in the above example. This means that maker number 23 made the food for the Layton Tennis Club. The organiser keeps a list of these codes and the makers' details.

Foods or ingredients that are known to cause allergic reactions

If food for sale contains any ingredient on the following list, the information must be given to a buyer on request, or displayed next to the food or on the packaging:

- ~~///~~ gluten (a substance found in wheat, rye, barley, oats and spelt [\[iv\]](#), and therefore present in foods made from these grains, such as flour)
- ~~///~~ fish and fish products
- ~~///~~ crustacea (shellfish) and products
- ~~///~~ egg and egg products
- ~~///~~ milk and milk products
- ~~///~~ soya beans and products
- ~~///~~ peanuts and products
- ~~///~~ sesame seeds and products
- ~~///~~ other nuts and products
- ~~///~~ sulphites (a preservative) [\[v\]](#)
- ~~///~~ royal jelly (a secretion from the salivary glands of honey bees)
- ~~///~~ bee pollen (pollen collected from the legs of bees)
- ~~///~~ propolis (a substance collected by bees).

[\[i\]](#) *Royal jelly is the milky white, viscous secretion from the salivary glands of honey bees.*

[\[ii\]](#) *The warning statement required is ' This product contains royal jelly which has been reported to cause severe allergic reactions and in rare cases, fatalities, especially in asthma and allergy sufferers'.*

[\[iii\]](#) *All exceptions to the labelling exemptions are listed in clause 2(2) of Standard 1.2.1 Application of Labelling and Other Information Requirements, in the Food Standards Code. The Code can be read on the Australia New Zealand Food Authority's website www.anzfa.gov.au. If any of these exceptions apply, the information must be provided to the purchaser upon request or displayed next to the food.*

[\[iv\]](#) *A variety of wheat.*

[\[v\]](#) *This applies to added sulphites in concentrations of 10mg/kg or more.*

4. TEMPERATURE CONTROL

The Food Safety Standards specify that potentially hazardous foods must be stored, displayed and transported at safe temperatures and, where possible, prepared at safe temperatures. However, you can also use time, rather than temperature, to keep food safe. This method is explained under ' The 2 hour/4 hour guide' .

Safe temperatures are 5°C or colder, or 60°C or hotter. Potentially hazardous food needs to be kept at these temperatures to prevent food-poisoning bacteria, which may be present in the food, from multiplying to dangerous levels. These bacteria can grow at temperatures between 5°C and 60°C, which is known as the temperature danger zone. The fastest rate of growth is at around 37°C, the temperature of the human body.

The Food Safety Standards also require you to have a thermometer if you prepare, handle or sell potentially hazardous food. This will enable you to check that safe temperatures are being maintained.

What foods are potentially hazardous?

Foods normally considered to be potentially hazardous are:

- ~~///~~ raw meats, cooked meats and food containing meat, such as casseroles, curries, lasagne and meat pies;
- ~~///~~ dairy products and foods containing dairy products, such as milk, cream, custard and dairy-based desserts;

- ☞ seafood (excluding live seafood) and food containing seafood, such as seafood salad;
- ☞ processed fruits and vegetables, such as prepared salads and ready-to-eat fruit packs;
- ☞ cooked rice and pasta;
- ☞ processed foods containing eggs, beans, nuts or other protein-rich food, such as quiche and soya bean products; and
- ☞ foods that contain any of the above foods, such as sandwiches, rice salads and pasta salads.

Keeping food cold

When you are preparing food, make sure that you have enough refrigerator space or insulated boxes with ice bricks to store the food. It is important to remember that refrigerators do not work properly when they are overloaded or when food is packed tightly, because the cold air cannot circulate.



If you are running out of room in your refrigerator, remove foods that are not potentially hazardous, such as drinks. The temperature of these foods is not critical and they can be kept cool in insulated containers with ice or ice blocks.

Cooling foods

If potentially hazardous foods have to be cooled, their temperature should be reduced as quickly as possible. The temperature should fall from 60°C to 21°C in less than two hours and be reduced to 5°C or colder in the next four hours. It is difficult to cool food within these times unless you put food into shallow containers.

Keeping food hot

If you are keeping food hot on cooktops, in ovens or in bain marie units, the equipment needs to be set high enough to ensure that the food remains hot (60 ° C or hotter).

The 2 hour / 4 hour guide

Although potentially hazardous food should be kept at 5°C or colder or 60°C or hotter wherever possible, this food can be safely between 5°C and 60°C provided it is between these temperatures **for less than four hours**. This is because it takes more than four hours for food-poisoning bacteria to grow to dangerous levels.

The 2 hour/4 hour guide applies to ready-to-eat potentially hazardous food. It provides guidance on how long this type of food can be held safely at temperatures between 5°C and 60°C and what should happen to it after certain times. The times refer to the life of the food, including preparation and cooling, not just to display times, so remember to add up the total time that the food has been between 5°C and 60°C.

Total time limit between 5°C and 60°C	What you should do
Less than 2 hours	Refrigerate or use immediately
Between 2 hours and 4 hours	Use immediately
More than 4 hours	Throw out

Why have a thermometer?

A thermometer is essential in ensuring that food is kept at safe temperatures. If your organisation prepares, handles or sells any potentially hazardous food, it must have a thermometer which is accurate to ±1°C. This means that when the thermometer shows a temperature of 5°C, the actual temperature will be between 4°C and 6°C. The thermometer must be available for use when foods are being prepared, so you may need more than one if foods are prepared in different places.

How to clean and sanitise your thermometer

As the probe of the thermometer will be inserted into food, the probe must be cleaned and sanitised before it is used to measure the temperature of the food. This is especially important when the thermometer is used to measure the temperature of raw food and then ready-to-eat food, for example raw chicken and cooked chicken. To clean and sanitise your thermometer:

- ☞ wash the probe to remove any grease and food particles;
- ☞ sanitise the probe using alcohol wipes or very hot water; and
- ☞ thoroughly dry the probe using a disposable towel or let it air dry.

Checking temperatures of food

- ☞ Determine the warmest area of a coolroom or the coldest area of a hot display unit.
- ☞ Insert the clean, dry probe into the food.
- ☞ Remember that temperature readings are not instant- wait until the temperature has stabilised before reading.
- ☞ Stabilise the thermometer between measuring hot and cold foods by allowing the thermometer to come back to room temperature.
- ☞ If the food is packaged or frozen, place the length of the probe between two packages of the food.

Remember that the temperature at the centre of food may be different from the surface temperature. For example, when cooked food is being cooled in the refrigerator, the centre of the food will take the longest to cool. Therefore, when checking the temperature of this food, make sure that you check the centre.

How to check the accuracy of your thermometer

Thermometers have to be accurate to ensure that temperatures are correctly measured. Ask the company that supplied your thermometer how often the thermometer should be checked for accuracy. It is best to have your thermometer regularly checked and maintained by the supplier of the thermometer. However, if you would like to check the accuracy of your thermometer yourself, use the following method.

- ☞ Place some ice into a container with a small amount of cold water. The ice should not float if the correct amount of water is used.
- ☞ Mix into a slurry and insert the thermometer probe.
- ☞ Leave it for about three minutes.
- ☞ Check and note the temperature. It should read 0°C.
- ☞ Do this three times and compare the temperatures recorded.
- ☞ If they vary by more than 1°C, get your thermometer checked by the supplier.

5. SAUSAGE SIZZLES AND BARBECUES

Sausage sizzles and barbecues are a popular way to raise money for charities and community organisations. They are often held outdoors to take advantage of Australia's good weather and open spaces.

Provided you take some simple food safety precautions and sell freshly cooked food straight from the barbecue, the food should be safe.



Preparing and cooking food safely

Take the following precautions at sausage sizzles and barbecues to ensure that food is safe.

- ☞ Finish preparing raw meat before leaving for the site such as slicing, marinating or skewering.
- ☞ Pack raw meat into insulated boxes with ice bricks for transportation.
- ☞ Handle food with tongs or other equipment. Use separate equipment to handle raw and cooked meats. Hands should not be used unless absolutely necessary, and then handwashing facilities must be available. Hands must be washed after handling raw meats.

- ✂ Keep cooked meat and salads separate from raw meat at all times to prevent contamination.
- ✂ Cover food to protect it from contamination.
- ✂ Use clean and dry utensils for serving the food - **never** place cooked meat back on the trays that held the raw meat.
- ✂ Cook chicken, sausages and hamburgers until juices run clear - steaks can be cooked to preference.
- ✂ Throw left-over food away unless refrigeration equipment is available to rapidly cool the food.

Disposable utensils

Wherever possible, single-use (disposable) utensils such as knives, forks, plates and cups should be used and thrown away after use. These items should be kept covered until required and should be handled carefully to minimise any risk of contamination. Re-useable items such as mugs should not be used unless there are facilities available on-site to wash and sanitise them, or there are enough items for the duration of the event.

Water

If water is needed for hand washing or for washing up, a supply adequate to last the event must be provided. The water must be of drinkable quality. If using containers to transport water to the event, make sure that they are clean and have not been used to store chemicals.

If you do not have access to hot water for washing up, make sure that you take enough utensils, or disposable utensils, so that you can use separate utensils for the raw and the cooked food at the event.

Handwashing facilities

Unless a written exemption has been obtained from your local council or health authority, food handlers must wash their hands with warm running water. An exemption is only likely to be issued where enough water is not available for handwashing. In such circumstances the local council or health authority may permit the use of alternatives such as cleaning creams or gels, or sanitising wipes.

If you have access to water, you should set up a temporary handwashing facility that provides running water. You can do this by using a large water container with a tap at its base. Another container, such as a bucket, should collect the waste water, to keep the site dry and clean.

A supply of soap and paper towels must be provided at the handwashing facility so that handwashing can be undertaken properly. Supply a bin for used towels. This helps to keep the site tidy and prevents contamination from used towels.

6. PREPARING AND COOKING FOOD

People involved in the preparation and cooking of food also need to read the segment *Health and hygiene for food handlers*. It is particularly important that you do not prepare or cook food if you are ill with diarrhoea and/or vomiting.

Buying food

When you buy potentially hazardous food, place it in insulated bags or boxes for transporting to the preparation place if it is not close to your shops. Place your potentially hazardous food in a refrigerator or freezer as soon as possible. Refer to *Temperature control* for a list of foods that are potentially hazardous.

Preparing food

Before preparing food, make sure that hands, clothes, equipment and kitchen surfaces are clean. They will also need to be kept clean throughout food preparation.

If your event is to be held outdoors with limited facilities, prepare the food in a kitchen and then transport it to the event. This does not mean that you need to cook food before you take it to the event but, for example, you should slice the raw meat ready for cooking. In fact, food that is freshly cooked at

the event and served straight away, as with barbecues, has less chance of becoming unsafe than food that is pre-cooked and then taken to the event. Therefore, wherever possible, try to cook food at the event rather than pre-cooking it.

Preventing food from becoming contaminated during preparation

The most important step to remember before preparing food is to wash and dry your hands thoroughly.

Try to use tongs and other utensils when preparing food that will not be cooked before it is eaten, such as salads and sandwiches. You may prefer to wear gloves, but remember that they should be used for one task only (for example, breaking up a cooked chicken for sandwiches). When you start the next task, wear new gloves.

Never use the same utensils for raw meats and foods that are ready to eat, such as cooked meats, unless they have been thoroughly cleaned, sanitised and dried.

Cooked food and other food that is ready to eat, such as salads, should always be placed on clean and dry serving dishes.

Cleaning and sanitising utensils

There are three steps needed to effectively clean and sanitise utensils:

- ~~///~~ washing;
- ~~///~~ sanitising; and
- ~~///~~ drying.

Utensils such as cutting boards, bowls and knives need to be thoroughly washed in warm soapy water. After washing, the utensils should look clean and there should be no food or anything else visible on them. Effective cleaning will remove most of the dangerous bacteria present. Sanitising will then kill any that might remain.

A dishwasher is very effective at sanitising if it has a hot wash and drying cycle. If you do not have a dishwasher, you will need to sanitise in a sink using a chemical sanitiser or very hot water. If using a chemical sanitiser such as a sodium hypochlorite - or quaternary ammonium - based solution, ensure that it can be safely used for sanitising eating, drinking and cooking utensils. Follow the instructions on the container carefully, as different sanitisers work in different ways. If you are using very hot water, take extra care to avoid being scalded.

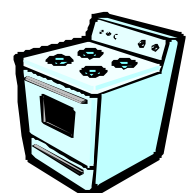
All utensils must then be thoroughly dried before they are re-used. Air-drying is best but tea towels can be used if they are clean.

If you are washing up at an event being held outdoors, make sure you have access to plenty of hot water. If hot water is not available, disposable eating and drinking utensils should be used and enough cooking utensils provided to last the duration of the event so that washing up is not necessary.

Cooking

Always cook food thoroughly. Do not partially cook food and then warm it up later. Cook chicken, sausages and hamburgers until juices run clear - beef steaks can be cooked to preference. Cooking will reduce dangerous bacteria to safe levels if it is done properly. Remember that some food-poisoning bacteria can protect themselves from cooking and while they will not be present in enough numbers to make someone sick just after the food is cooked, they can start growing again if the cooked food is left at temperatures between 5°C and 60°C for too long. This is why cooling cooked food quickly is so important.

Wherever possible, try to cook food as close to the time that you will be serving or selling it. For example, if you can, take the food to the event and cook it there. This reduces the chance of the food becoming contaminated after it has been cooked. It also means that there won't be enough time for food-poisoning bacteria to grow to dangerous levels on the cooked food before it is eaten.



If it isn't practical to cook food at the event, you will need to pre-cook the food and transport it hot, or alternatively cook it, cool it and then transport it cold. Refer to *Transporting food*.

Cooling food

If you decide you want to pre-cook food and then cool it, you will need to ensure that the food is cooled rapidly to 5°C. If a large container of cooked food, for example a beef curry, is placed in a refrigerator for cooling, it can take as long as 24 hours to cool to 5°C. This is very dangerous as the centre of the food will remain warm and allow food-poisoning bacteria to grow to dangerous levels.

The Food Safety Standards require cooked food to be cooled to 5°C within 6 hours. The food must be cooled from 60°C to 21°C within 2 hours and from 21°C to 5°C within a further 4 hours. Safe cooling can be achieved by:

- ~~///~~ removing the food from the stove top, oven or other heat source after it has cooked;
- ~~///~~ allowing the food to initially cool outside the refrigerator - but make sure it is placed in the refrigerator as soon as any part of it drops to a temperature of 60°C; and
- ~~///~~ placing the food in shallow containers.

You will need to use your thermometer to check that the cooked food is being cooled within the 6-hour time limit.

Reheating food

Cold food (which is to be served hot) will need to be quickly and thoroughly heated at the event until it is steaming hot and then kept hot until it is served. It is best to re-heat the food to a temperature of 70°C and hold the food at this temperature for at least two minutes. Use your thermometer to check that all of the food reaches at least this temperature.

Keeping food hot

Hot food will need to be kept hot (60 ° C or above) at the event. This could be achieved by using gas or electric appliances.

Making sandwiches

Sandwiches are a popular product for community and fundraising events. Making them usually involves a lot of handling, which makes personal hygiene very important.

Sandwiches are often filled with potentially hazardous food and should be handled and stored like any other high-risk food. They should be made fresh as close to the start of the event as possible. If this is not practical, they should be kept in a refrigerator. Make sure that you have enough refrigerator space to store them safely - they may take up a lot of room.

Because sandwiches require a lot of handling, the contact time with the person making them is increased. Because of this, it is very important that people who are ill do not make the sandwiches.

Sandwiches should be kept under temperature control when they are transported and displayed for sale. Alternatively, you could use time, rather than temperature, to keep the sandwiches safe. For more advice see *Temperature control*.

7. TRANSPORTING FOOD

When you are transporting food, you need to consider two main food safety issues: keeping the food protected from contamination and, if the food is potentially hazardous, keeping it cold (5°C or colder) or hot (60°C or hotter).

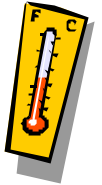
Protecting food from contamination

It is important to protect food from contamination by keeping it covered at all times. You can achieve this by using containers with lids or by applying plastic film over containers. Materials used to cover food should be suitable for food contact, to ensure that they do not contain any chemicals that could leach into the food. Aluminium foil, plastic film and clean paper may be used, and food should be completely covered. Packaged products should not need additional covering.

Previously used materials and newspaper may contaminate food and should not be used.

Temperature control

When potentially hazardous foods are transported they should be kept cold (5°C or colder) or hot (60°C or hotter) during the journey. Alternatively, you could use time, rather than temperature, to keep the food safe while it is being transported. Refer to *Temperature control* for more information.



If the journey is short, insulated containers may keep the food cold. If the journey is longer, you may need to use ice bricks to keep food cold and heat packs to keep food hot.

Place only pre-heated or pre-cooled food in an insulated container, which should have a lid to help maintain safe temperatures.

Insulated containers must be:

- ✂ in good condition and kept clean at all times;
- ✂ used only for food;
- ✂ kept away from other items such as chemicals, pet food, fuel and paint;
- ✂ be filled as quickly as possible and closed as soon as they have been filled; and
- ✂ kept closed until immediately before the food is needed or is placed in other temperature-controlled equipment.

Transport considerations

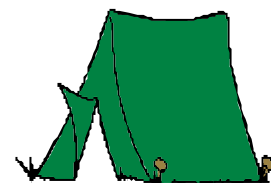
- ✂ Containers of cool food should be placed in the coolest part of the vehicle.
- ✂ If the inside of the vehicle is air-conditioned, cold food may be transported better here rather than in the boot.
- ✂ Vehicles should be clean. If the vehicle is normally used for carrying pets or dirty equipment, the food carrying area should be thoroughly cleaned or lined to prevent any contamination. This may not be necessary if food is transported in an insulated container with a tightly fitting lid.
- ✂ The journey should be properly planned and should be kept as short as possible.
- ✂ When collecting ingredients, cold foods should be collected last and immediately placed in insulated containers or cool bags for transporting to the preparation facility.
- ✂ When taking prepared foods to a venue, pack the food into insulated boxes as your last job.
- ✂ When you arrive at the venue, make it your first job to unload any hot or cold food and place it in temperature-controlled equipment.

8. CAMPING

Preparing food for camps can be very challenging because facilities found in the home or commercial food premises are not generally available. You need to properly plan to ensure food safety. The camp should be memorable only for the outdoor experience and not the food poisoning outbreak that could occur.

The five main considerations for keeping food safe in camps are:

- ✂ temperature control of food;
- ✂ water supply;
- ✂ handwashing facilities;



- ✍ protecting food from contamination; and
- ✍ disposal of rubbish and waste water to prevent the contamination of food.

Temperature control

The use of potentially hazardous foods when camping should be kept to a minimum unless the food can be kept cold (5°C or colder). Potentially hazardous foods support the growth of bacteria that can cause illness if large numbers of bacteria are present. For a list of potentially hazardous foods see *Temperature control*.

If your camp is catering for a large number of people, it may be practical to hire gas-powered refrigeration equipment or to use similar facilities close to the campsite.

If you only have limited equipment to keep food cold, buy potentially hazardous foods fresh daily and throw away any leftover food.

You could also consider purchasing foods that are shelf-stable. These are foods that do not need temperature-controlled storage until they are opened. Examples include long-life milk (heat-treated in the carton); canned meats, fish and dairy products; and dried and dehydrated foods.

Water supply

A safe water supply is probably the most important requirement when camping because water is necessary for preparing and cooking food, cleaning utensils and helping to maintain personal hygiene. Your camp will need access to water of drinking quality.

If water at the site is not suitable for drinking, it will need to be treated. The easiest way to treat this water is to boil it, but it has to be protected from contamination during cooling and storage. It is not always practical to boil the amount of water needed for food preparation and personal hygiene and you may wish to use chemical sterilisation. Always follow the manufacturers' instructions when using these chemicals.

Water filters may also be an option but they can be slow and must be maintained in good working condition. You will also need to check with the supplier of the filter to find out whether it will be effective for your purposes. Filters should not be damaged and they may need to be cleaned or replaced regularly.

Sources of drinking water, such as streams, wells and bores, should be protected. Access to the water collection point should be restricted and the area protected from animals and foreign matter.

Use only clean containers that are specifically kept for drinking water. Store them carefully at all times, whether they are full or empty, with their lids fastened.

Handwashing

For effective handwashing, clean warm running water is needed so that soap can function correctly and hands can be rinsed before they are dried. During camping, clean running water is not always readily available. A suitable alternative must be provided to ensure that hands do not contaminate food. You will need to obtain approval to use alternative handwashing methods from your local council or health authority. Alternative methods include the use of sterile wipes or cleaning gels.

If you have access to water of drinking quality, you should set up a temporary handwashing facility that provides running water. You can do this by using a large water container with a tap at its base. Another container, such as a bucket, should collect the waste water, to keep the site dry and clean.

A supply of soap and paper towels must be provided at the handwashing facilities so that handwashing can be undertaken properly. Supply a bin for used towels. This helps to keep the site tidy and prevents contamination from used towels.

Protecting food from contamination

It is very important to protect food from contamination. Bacteria cannot move from place to place by themselves they need help from poor food-handling practices. Poor food handling often allows bacteria to be transferred from a non-food source to food, and from one food to another. The risk of contamination is often greater when camping because only basic equipment and amenities may be available.

To protect food from contamination:

- ~~///~~ wash your hands before preparing or handling food;
- ~~///~~ keep food covered;
- ~~///~~ use separate utensils such as knives and chopping boards for different foods;
- ~~///~~ keep raw meat and raw fruits and vegetables well away from foods which are ready to eat, such as cooked meat and salads;
- ~~///~~ always thoroughly wash and dry your hands after handling raw meat; and
- ~~///~~ thoroughly wash and dry eating and drinking utensils and store in a clean place.

Disposal of rubbish and waste water

The disposal of rubbish and waste water needs careful planning because they attract pests and contaminate food if they are not properly stored and disposed of. Rubbish should be bagged and tied, and kept well away from food preparation areas.

There may be a designated disposal area for waste water at your camping site. Always use this - do not dispose of waste water in or near water sources.

9. HEALTH AND HYGIENE FOR FOOD HANDLERS

The Food Safety Standards contain requirements that apply only to food handlers. These requirements relate to health and hygiene and have been included to ensure that food handlers take steps to avoid contaminating food. A food handler is anyone who handles food or items that may come into contact with food, such as eating and drinking utensils. All food handlers are legally obliged to comply with the health and hygiene requirements set out in the Food Safety Standards.

Food businesses must inform all food handlers of their health and hygiene obligations under the Food Safety Standards. To help food businesses comply with the requirement, a copy of the health and hygiene requirements has been included as part of this fact sheet. You could ask all food handlers to sign a form, to say that they have received this fact sheet and the attached requirements. This is a good way of keeping checks on who has been advised. It also provides evidence that this requirement has been fulfilled. You may want to delegate this responsibility to one person in your organisation so that a consistent approach is taken and no volunteers are missed.

Health requirements

If you are ill or have an infection you can easily transfer harmful bacteria or viruses to food.

Do not handle food if:

- ~~///~~ you are ill with vomiting, diarrhoea, fever or sore throat with fever; or
- ~~///~~ your doctor has diagnosed that you have or carry a food borne illness.

If you have volunteered for an event and then become ill with any of the above symptoms, let the event organiser know that you can no longer work. This is very important, no matter how short-staffed the event may be. Food handlers who are ill can easily make food unsafe. Not only is it against the law, it is not worth the risk. If you start to feel unwell while you are at an event, stop handling food and let the event organiser know immediately.

If you have:

- ~~///~~ infected sores on your hands, arm or face; or
 - ~~///~~ any discharges from your ear, nose or eyes (such as a cold),
- you can continue to handle food provided you take extra precautions to prevent food being contaminated. For example, cover the skin sore or take medication to dry up the discharge.

Hygiene requirements

General hygiene

Each food handler must take all precautions to ensure that food or surfaces that come in contact with food are not contaminated by his or her body or anything he or she is wearing. This includes hair, saliva, mucus, sweat, blood, fingernails, clothes, jewellery or bandages.

You are required to:

- ~~///~~ avoid handling ready-to-eat food such as salads and cooked food use tongs or other implements instead;
- ~~///~~ wear clean outer clothing;
- ~~///~~ make sure bandages and dressings on exposed parts of your body (such as the hands, arms or face) are covered with waterproof coverings;
- ~~///~~ not eat over uncovered food or equipment and utensils;
- ~~///~~ not sneeze, blow or cough over uncovered food or equipment and utensils; and
- ~~///~~ not spit, smoke or chew tobacco where food is handled.

Handwashing

The most important measure to protect food from contamination is proper handwashing because clean and dry hands limit the transfer of harmful organisms to food. The Food Safety Standards require food handlers to wash their hands whenever hands are likely to be a source of contamination of food, including:

- ~~///~~ before handling food;
- ~~///~~ between handling raw food and food that is ready to eat, such as cooked food and salads;
- ~~///~~ after using the toilet;
- ~~///~~ after smoking, coughing, sneezing, blowing the nose, eating or drinking;
- ~~///~~ after touching hair, scalp, mouth, nose or ear canal; and
- ~~///~~ after handling rubbish and other waste.

There are five steps that should be followed when washing hands. These are:

- ~~///~~ wet hands under warm running water;
- ~~///~~ soap hands, lathering well;
- ~~///~~ rub thoroughly, including the wrists and between the fingers;
- ~~///~~ rinse in clean water; and
- ~~///~~ dry thoroughly on paper towel, leaving no moisture on the hands.

LEGISLATIVE HEALTH AND HYGIENE REQUIREMENTS

Requirements for food handlers

13 General requirement

A food handler must take all reasonable measures not to handle food or surfaces likely to come into contact with food in a way that is likely to compromise the safety and suitability of food.

14 Health of food handlers

1. A food handler who has a symptom that indicates the handler may be suffering from a food-borne disease, or knows he or she is suffering from a food-borne disease, or is a carrier of a food-borne disease, must, if at work:
 - (a) report that he or she is or may be suffering from the disease, or knows that he or she is carrying the disease, to his or her supervisor, as the case may be;
 - (b) not engage in any handling of food where there is a reasonable likelihood of food contamination as a result of the disease; and
 - (c) if continuing to engage in other work on the food premises - take all practicable measures to prevent food from being contaminated as a result of the disease.
2. A food handler who suffers from a condition must, if at work:
 - (a) if there is a reasonable likelihood of food contamination as a result of suffering the condition - report that he or she is suffering from the condition to his or her supervisor; and
 - (b) if continuing to engage in the handling of food or other work - take all practicable measures to prevent food being contaminated as a result of the condition.
3. A food handler must notify his or her supervisor if the food handler knows or suspects that he or she may have contaminated food whilst handling food.

15 Hygiene of food handlers

1. A food handler must, when engaging in any food handling operation:
 - (a) take all practicable measures to ensure his or her body, anything from his or her body, and anything he or she is wearing does not contaminate food or surfaces likely to come into contact with food;
 - (b) take all practicable measures to prevent unnecessary contact with ready-to-eat food;
 - (c) ensure outer clothing is of a level of cleanliness that is appropriate for the handling of food that is being conducted.
 - (d) only use on exposed parts of his or her body bandages and dressings that are completely covered with a waterproofed covering;
 - (e) not eat over unprotected food or surfaces likely to come into contact with food;
 - (f) not sneeze, blow or cough over unprotected food or surfaces likely to come into contact with food;
 - (g) not spit, smoke or use tobacco or similar preparations in areas in which food is handled; and
 - (h) not urinate or defecate except in a toilet.
2. A food handler must wash his or her hands in accordance with subclause (4):
 - (a) whenever his or her hands are likely to be a source of contamination of food;
 - (b) immediately before working with ready-to-eat food after handling raw food; and
 - (c) immediately after using the toilet.
3. A food handler must, when engaging in a food handling operation that involves unprotected food or surfaces likely to come into contact with food, wash his or her hands in accordance with subclause (4):
 - (a) before commencing or re-commencing handling food;
 - (b) immediately after smoking, coughing, sneezing, using a handkerchief or disposable tissue, eating, drinking or using tobacco or similar substances; and

- (c) after touching his or her hair, scalp or a body opening.
- 4. A food handler must, whenever washing his or her hands:
 - (a) use the hand washing facilities provided;
 - (b) thoroughly clean his or her hands using soap or other effective means, and warm running water; and
 - (c) thoroughly dry his or her hands on a single use towel or in another way that is not likely to transfer pathogenic micro-organisms to the hands.
- 5. A food handler who handles food at temporary food premises does not have to clean his or her hands with warm running water, or comply with paragraph (4)(c), if the appropriate enforcement agency has provided the food business operating from the temporary food premises with approval in writing for this purpose.

Acknowledgements



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For further information on the food standards and other regulatory matters, please see the ANZFA website at www.anzfa.gov.au.

For Further information

For further information regarding this guideline, please contact the Environment and Waste Branch on (02) 4560 4571.

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