



FOOD SAFETY

newsletter

Welcome to the 8th Issue of Wagga Wagga City Council's Food Safety Newsletter.

Staff at Wagga Wagga City Council would like to take this opportunity to thank all those involved in food regulation in Wagga Wagga and reinforce the importance of continuing to work together to increase food safety compliance and reduce the incidence of food borne illness in our region.

HIGH RISK FOODS INCLUDE:

- meat, especially undercooked mince and rolled, formed or tenderised meats
- raw or undercooked poultry such as chicken, duck and turkey
- raw or lightly cooked eggs including foods made from raw egg such as unpasteurised mayonnaise
- smallgoods such as salami and hams
- seafood
- cooked rice not kept at correct temperatures
- cooked pasta not kept at correct temperatures
- prepared salads such as coleslaw, pasta salads and rice salads
- prepared fruit salads
- unpasteurised dairy products.

Scores on Doors Program - Show off your good food safety record

A new rating system that lets you display your good food safety record to your customers is coming soon! Wagga Wagga City Council will introduce and launch its Scores on Doors Program in the new year. The Scores on Doors certificate is a great advertisement for businesses that comply with the food safety legislation.

The program will be aimed at the retail food business sector selling food that is ready-to-eat, intended for immediate consumption, and potentially hazardous which means it may require special handling and storage to be safe. The following retail food businesses will be eligible to participate: restaurants, takeaways, pubs, hotels, cafes, bakeries and clubs.

Depending on how well your business performs and if your business is eligible, a star rating certificate will be assigned after a routine inspection by Council's Environmental Health Officers. The certificate will show a star rating ranging from three stars, indicating a 'good' level of food safety compliance, to five stars, indicating an 'excellent' level of food safety compliance.

The program which is not mandatory will require participating businesses to display the certificate in a place highly visible to customers, usually in the business' front window or door. Council will be responsible for maintaining the excellent star ratings of businesses on Council's website.

Cracking Down on salmonella

It may be common knowledge that undercooked meats such as chicken, or poor food handling controls can lead to a food borne illness outbreak.

However did you know large food borne illness outbreaks have been associated with foods made from raw eggs?

So what classifies as raw egg foods?

Eggs that do not undergo a cooking step before being used in dishes are classified as raw egg foods. For example:

- sauces and spreads such as mayonnaise, aioli, hollandaise and egg butter
- desserts made without a cooking step, such as cheesecake, tiramisu and mousse
- lightly cooked foods, such as custard, fried ice-cream, some ice-cream and gelato that are made on the premises

Steps your business can take to reduce the possibility of a food borne illness outbreak.

- drinks such as eggnog and egg flip
- For foods that traditionally contain raw or lightly cooked eggs (e.g. mayonnaise, hollandaise sauce, mousse), use commercially prepared foods instead of making these foods from raw eggs
- Use pasteurised pulp alternatives as an ingredient in foods that traditionally contain raw or lightly cooked eggs such as:
 - processed whole eggs, egg whites and egg yolks which are available in liquid, frozen or dried forms
 - sugared egg yolk which is available for cakes and desserts
 - salted egg yolk which is available for mayonnaise and sauce

meet the team

Meet Council's Environmental Health Officers (EHOs):

Sharomi Dayanand

Environmental Health Coordinator



Sharomi joined Council in 2006 with years of overseas experience as an EHO.

Geoff Lang



Geoff joined the EHO team from Isaac Regional Council, Qld in 2013.

Geoff has many years of experience in the food retail industry.

Claire Rozema



Council welcomes its newest EHO from Penrith City Council with 5 years experience in the Environmental Health field.

contact us:

Environmental Health Officers
Call: 1300 292 442
council@wagga.nsw.gov.au
www.wagga.nsw.gov.au

REMEMBER DON'T COOK WHEN YOU'RE CROOK!

This newsletter has been developed to ensure open lines of communication exist between Council and the local food industry.

Pasteurisation destroys disease-causing organisms such as salmonella.

Where pasteurised or commercial products cannot be used, remember that good food handling processes are essential.

- Wash hands before and after handling raw eggs.
 - Do not separate eggs with bare hands or using the shell. It is preferable to use a sanitised egg separator.
 - Immediately refrigerate the raw egg
- Use ingredients such as lemon juice or vinegar to acidify the raw egg dressings to a pH value at or below 4.2.
 - Do not top up previously made sauces, mayonnaise or egg butter with newly made ones.
 - Do not use dirty or cracked eggs.

Legal obligations for food handlers

Whilst summer months are often associated with an increase in food related illness due to increased temperatures, food handlers need to remember that winter is also a high risk time due to an increase in viral gastroenteritis. This highly infectious condition causes vomiting, diarrhea, and headaches and is easily passed from person to person through poor hygiene and food related practices.

Under Standard 3.2.2 of the Food Standards Code it is specified that a food handler must notify his or her supervisor if they are suffering from, or suspect that they are suffering from, a food borne illness or disease.

They must not handle any food or take part in any other work on the food premises that may result in contamination of food. And they must let their supervisor know if they suspect that food may already have been contaminated.

Just purchased a food business?

Have you:

- ✓ Registered your business with Council's Environmental Health Section?
- ✓ Notified/amended your food business details with the NSW Food Authority?
- ✓ Appointed a Food Safety Supervisor and ensured the certificate is easily available on the premises?

Selling a food business?

Have you:

- ✓ Notified Council?
- ✓ Completed and submitted a notification of business closure form?

Prior to purchasing a food business, buyers could arrange for a food business pre-purchase inspection. Inspection charges will apply.

If you intend on constructing a new food business premises contact Council's Town Planners to discuss DA requirements. Two days prior to commencing trade it is compulsory that a food business be inspected by Council's Environmental Health Officer for compliance with the Food Standard Code and Food Act 2003.

Causes of food poisoning

Some foods accommodate harmful bugs or toxins more than others.

The bugs or toxins may be present on foods at the time of purchase, get on to food by cross contamination and poor hygiene or grow to harmful levels as a result of poor temperature control.

Harmful bugs can be:

- carried on the bodies of people handling food
- frequently present in the throat, nose, skin, hair and faeces
- transferred to food after touching the nose, mouth or hair or smoking without washing hands before handling food. Sneezing or coughing around or on food can also lead to contamination.

Food poisoning can be caused by:

- not cooking food thoroughly
- not storing food below 5°C or not storing hot food above 60°C
- someone who is ill or has poor hand hygiene handling the food
- eating food after a 'use-by' date
- cross contamination, where bacteria is spread between food, surfaces, utensils and equipment.

Remember to take food safety precautions to prevent the above.

**FOOD SAFETY
IS IN YOUR HANDS**