



Autumn/Winter 2006

Inside This Issue

- Scombrototoxin
- Legal Cases
- Are you a high risk business?
- Changes to enforcement
- Inspection reports are released to the Surrey Mirror
- Mobile food units tested
- Are you complying with the law?

Advice Leaflet

- Scores on Doors
- Safer Food Better Business - Free training available
- Health and Safety - **Calling all Catering Premises** : Just how good is your business at avoiding slips and trips? Complete the DIY questionnaire.

Safe Food Good Hygiene Award

We are proud to announce the 2006 winners of our Safe Food-Good Hygiene Award:

**Eurest, Philips Electronics,
Cross Oak Lane, Redhill
&
Pfizer Sodexho Ltd.,
Walton Oaks, Dorking Road, Tadworth**

To achieve this award, Businesses must;

- meet the current legal standard
- ensure staff are properly trained and supervised
- have a food safety management system in place
- demonstrate a good history of compliance with food safety law and best practice has been maintained.

For more information on how to apply:

www.reigate-banstead.gov.uk/public/environment/eh/food/safe_food.asp

Or contact Nicky Woolley on 01737 276417 for an information pack.



Is this your food business?

When was the last time you cleaned under the fridge/freezer? This was found underneath a fridge of a pub kitchen in the Borough. Even though the debris doesn't look appetising to us it would be a feast for a rodent or cockroach.



Tip: When buying equipment such as a fridge or cooker, ensure it is fitted with wheels to allow easier cleaning.

Did you spot the broken tile? Food premises must be in good repair.

All areas where food is prepared and stored must be kept clean and capable of being kept clean. This is so that pests are not attracted to your premises and the risk of food being contaminated by dirt and the bacteria/mould in the dirt is minimised.

Facts about Chemical Foodborne Illness

Scombrototoxin

Scombrototoxic fish poisoning is caused by the bacterial spoilage of scombroid fish (e.g. tuna, mackerel, sardines) that produce histamine. The histamine is caused when spoilage bacteria multiply in unrefrigerated food. The toxin is resistant to high temperatures and cannot be destroyed by cooking.

The onset is rapid, ranging from immediate to 30 minutes. The duration of the illness is usually 3 hours, but may last several days. Symptoms include burning sensation in the mouth, diarrhoea, flushing, headache, sweating and sometimes, nausea and abdominal pain.



Scombrototoxic poisoning can be avoided by ensuring you buy from a reputable supplier and that raw fish is always kept as fresh as possible by storing in ice, by refrigeration or by freezing.

Defrosting of frozen products should be carried out by refrigeration or microwave. NEVER LEAVE RAW FISH AT AMBIENT (ROOM) TEMPERARTURE.

Legal Action

Local business shut down by EHO's

A kebab and café in the Reigate and Banstead area was ordered to close by Environmental Health Officers after they found an extensive rat infestation. Officers found rat droppings behind the servery and in the cooking area. A hygiene emergency prohibition notice (HEPN) was fixed to the front window informing the public why it had been shut. The premises could not reopen until officers had carried out an inspection to ensure the risk had been removed.

Food businesses must have procedures in place to prevent food pests, namely rats, mice, cockroaches and flying insects gaining entry into food storage and preparation areas.

We recommend any food business to employ a specialist pest control company to routinely bait and give advice on good practice.

Cockroach-in-poppadom restaurant fined £40,000

Environmental Health Officers were called to the Shere Khan restaurant, Manchester and found the premises were filthy with dirt and grease, and infested with cockroaches.

Manchester Magistrates heard that live insects were found on sacks of rice and crawling across the floor. A "soup of grease, dirt and food debris" oozed between joints on the floor, equipment was dirty, a plate rack was rusted, chopping boards were encrusted with old food and there were no washing or drying materials, indicating that employees did not use the washing facility. Magistrates imposed the maximum possible fine of £5,000 on each of the eight offences (£40,000).



Five charged for naked slaughterhouse pictures

Five young Swedish men decided to photograph themselves nude in their workplace, the pictures made it onto the internet. The workplace was a slaughterhouse and later they were charged with breaking food hygiene laws. The matter came to the attention of the police and the Swedish National Food Administration. The problem was not the nakedness, but the fact that they were prancing around without protective clothing.

In case there is any doubt the purpose of protective clothing is to protect the food, not the other way round!

Is Yours a 'high' food business?

In 2005 the Food Standards Agency carried out a national survey to assess standards of hygiene in UK food premises. The survey found that of catering premises take-aways, restaurants, and cafés posed the greatest risk, followed by pubs. Generally, businesses employing up to five members of staff were the most likely ones to pose a higher health risk. The risks fell as the number of employees increased.



0.3% of retailers and 0.3% caterers were found to pose an imminent risk to health. The most common breaches in standards were, in descending order: cleanliness; storage; cross-contamination; cooking; hygiene; and pest control.

For the full survey: www.food.gov.uk/multimedia/pdfs/premesissurvey05.pdf.

Are you a MASTER CHEF?

The BBC MasterChef Online Course is designed to increase your awareness and test your knowledge of food safety and cooking skills. Try the online course: http://www.bbc.co.uk/food/tv_and_radio/masterchef/.

Would you like up to £150 per person to attend training courses?

The European Union is funding food hygiene training for small businesses. For more details see enclosed leaflet or contact Business link on 0845 600 9 006. The funding is available until September 2007.

Changes to enforcement

Until recently the Council has been obliged to inspect each and every food business as part of its food safety programme. Low risk food businesses (Category E) now have the option to fill in a self assessment questionnaire. This system is designed to lighten the load on businesses and free up officers time so they can concentrate on the businesses that need help.



If you are a low risk business and you are sent a self-assessment questionnaire *please* complete it and send it back. If you are not sure give us a call.

Surrey Mirror request food inspection reports

Mole Valley District Council was legally obliged to hand over copies of food hygiene inspection reports to the Surrey Mirror newspaper. The findings were later published with the heading '**Beetles, droppings, mould - all in restaurant kitchens**' with individual businesses being named and shamed.

We printed a list of businesses in the autumn/winter newsletter for which reports had been released. It did cause some concern that the reports could be misinterpreted or exaggerated with several of the business owners phoning up to complain.



The public has a right to know! It's the law. It's not just the Freedom of Information Act you need to consider. The Food Standards Agency is piloting 'scores on doors' scheme. This means hygiene scores given during an inspection will be displayed to the public. For more information on Scores on Doors see the enclosed advice sheet.

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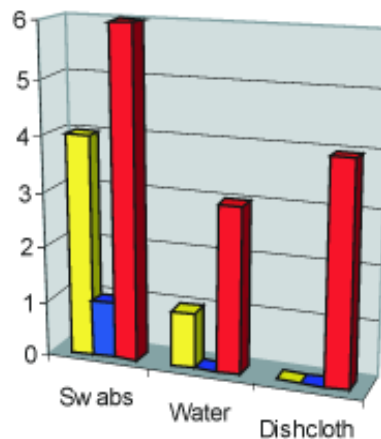
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Food Mobiles : Sampling Study

Due to poor compliance of some mobile premises such as burger vans a national study is being carried out on their hygiene practices. The study provided an opportunity to help educate vendors at the time of sampling and in relation to feedback on any poor results obtained. So far we have taken samples from four mobiles. Swabs were taken from a range of surfaces within the mobile that are used for the preparation and storage of open ready-to-eat food. Cleaning cloths used by the vendor were taken leaving a replacement disposable cloth in place of the one collected. Water samples were taken from the main source of water used by the mobile vendor.



■ Satisfactory ■ Acceptable ■ Unsatisfactory



As you can see from these results so far, hygiene leaves a lot to be desired here. Officers are following up poor results to ensure improvements are made.

Are you complying with the law?

A study has shown most small to medium businesses believe they fully comply with the law unless the EHO tells them otherwise. This is because often EHO's are the main source of information for any such businesses. Most believe their business activities could not cause a food poisoning outbreak; therefore think Hazard Analysis doesn't apply to them. We assure you it does. To help small businesses a new website has been launched to keep you up to date with the changes to environmental legislation. Businesses can register with Netregs to receive free email update about environmental issues affecting them. For further information and to register, visit: www.netregs.gov.uk.

For more details of food safety legislation, visit: www.food.gov.uk/foodindustry/regulation/europeleg/.

Remember - it is the food business operator's responsibility to fully comply with the Law.

For details of practical advice on running business, visit: www.businesslink.gov.uk.