

February 2012

Public Protection Services
Food Safety Team
Wiltshire Council

DX 116892 Trowbridge 3

Dear Sir/Madam

We are writing to you to draw your attention to a couple of issues that have recently been raised in catering premises.

E Coli 0157 Control of Cross Contamination – Guidance for food business operators and enforcement authorities (FSA)

The Food Standards Agency has recently issued advice regarding E Coli 0157. The guidance has not changed the law or introduced any new regulations but has focused the need for every food business operator who handles both raw and ready-to-eat food to review their food safety procedure for controlling cross contamination.

In particular, the Food Standards Agency have identified that complex dual use equipment **MUST NOT** be used for raw and ready to eat foods. This includes vacuum packers, mincers and slicers. The reason for this is because it is very difficult to adequately sanitise dual use equipment therefore providing a risk of E Coli contamination. If you currently use complex equipment for both raw and cooked foods you must now consider how you are going to meet this requirement, such as using separate, dedicated equipment for raw and ready to eat foods.

Enclosed is a factsheet that summarises the FSA Guidance document detailed above. It covers:

- The designation of a 'clean area' for ready-to-eat food.
- The use of separate complex equipment for raw and ready-to-eat foods.
- Effective cleaning and disinfection procedures and the correct dilution of chemicals.
- Personal hygiene and hand washing.

The factsheet provides useful information which should be incorporated into your documented food safety management system where appropriate.

Also enclosed is a DVD which has been produced by the Food Standards Agency to help businesses identify their food hazards. Both the DVD and factsheet provide useful information which should be incorporated into your documented food safety management system where appropriate.

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Gas Safety in the Catering Industry

Public Protection Officers from Wiltshire Council have been working in partnership with the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) and Gas Safe to raise awareness of the importance of gas safety. Gas safety is a known problem in the catering industry with work being carried out illegally or equipment/services not being fitted or maintained properly. This can have serious consequences including explosion or asphyxiation from poisonous gases. Recent work in Wiltshire revealed 67 at risk situations, appliances installed by unregistered engineers and one immediately dangerous situation.

It is important that all businesses ensure their appliances are checked by competent qualified gas engineers on a regular basis and effective maintenance follows the manufacturers instructions. All gas safety examination records and documentation must be kept and be available during inspections.

Enclosed is a Gas Safety Information Sheet which has been produced following the gas safety awareness project to assist you in carrying out checks on your gas appliances. This practical guide is simple to follow and complete. Reviewing it on a regular basis will help you check that your gas appliances are operating correctly and that you are complying with health and safety legislation. This sheet can be placed in your Safer Food Better Business folder and Officers will check this alongside your food safety documentation when they visit you.

Both these issues will be discussed in detail at your next inspection but if you have any queries or would like further advice on compliance please contact me on the number below.

Yours faithfully

Food Safety Team

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Fax.

Email:

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