

## BE FOOD SAFE

Welcome to Cook Shire's Food Safety News.

This newsletter is to provide you with information on food safety matters and any current topical issues affecting your businesses.

**Know your food business** – You can now complete a **self-assessment checklist** regularly to ensure you are complying and providing a safe and suitable food for your customers. [Know your food business: A self-assessment guide to the Food Safety Standards.](#)

**Any ideas** - Please forward ideas and feedback via email at [mail@cook.qld.gov.au](mailto:mail@cook.qld.gov.au)

## COVID SAFE PLAN/CHECKLIST

It has been a busy 12 months and we are still not out of the woods!

### REMEMBER:

- Implement the current *Public Health Directions* for your food business.
- The new COVID checklist has been updated, download, implement and display. [Food Services | Queensland Government \(covid19.qld.gov.au\)](#)
- From 1 May 2021 all hospitality businesses must use the [Check In Qld App](#).
- COVID compliance checks are about to happen, so be prepared and not be alarmed.



## EXHAUST CANOPY AND FIRE SAFETY



**Q** – How often should the firefighting equipment be serviced?

**A** – In accordance with AS 1851 Maintenance of Fire Protection Systems and Equipment, It should be serviced every 6 months? So check that it has been tested and serviced by the fire service contractor.

**Q** – Do you have a Fire Safety Plan for your premises?

**A** – It is important to have a Fire Safety Plan to safeguard your employees and employees. A well thought-out-plan provides everyone peace of mind and can help the fire service do its work efficiently.

**Q** – When was the last time you cleaned the exhaust canopy duct, fans, vent, gutters, etc?

**A** – It is the responsibility of the operator to

maintain, service and clean the exhaust canopy regularly in accordance with the AS 1668.2 -1991 and the *Food Standards Code*.

In accordance with the *Work Health and Safety Act 2011*, you are required to provide a safe equipment and environment for your staff. Managing health and safety in food retail ([worksafe.qld.gov.au](http://worksafe.qld.gov.au))

**A** – Exhaust systems must be inspected regularly, at intervals consistent with usage, to determine whether cleaning is needed before a dangerous amount of grease has accumulate.

**Q** – Do you know that inadequate cleaning of exhaust canopy may become a food/fire safety issue?

**A** – There is a fire risk from the build of grease clogging up the fan. The mechanical ventilation system will not be effective if clogged up and therefore will not be inefficient. Ultimately, it will not be compliant because it will not effectively remove fumes, smoke and grease from the premises.

## HOW CLEAN IS YOUR KITCHEN?

Think your kitchen is already clean enough? Grab a flash light or camera and with the flash turned 'on' take some photos of those hard-to- reach areas i.e. underneath cooking equipment, deep fryer cabinet, exhaust canopy gutters, the back and under equipment, walls at low levels, etc. **You might be shocked to see what is really lurking around!**

- How often do you carry out a deep clean? When was the last time you moved your cooking appliances, shelving, equipment to clean internal and external surfaces, adjacent walls and floors, etc.?
- Do you implement a cleaning roster?

It is high time to declutter and clean. Focus on those "hard to reach" areas. **Having too much stuff around makes cleaning difficult and increase pest harbourage areas!** A clean kitchen speaks volume!

## PRIVATE WATER SUPPLY



On 17 January 2019, Environmental Health Officers from Tropical Public Health Services (Cairns) and Cook Shire Council investigated an outbreak of *Salmonella enteritidis*. The investigation revealed seven cases linked to a licensed food premises in Cook Shire. Food and water samples were collected and sent to the Queensland Health Forensic Scientific Services for analysis. A water sample collected from the kitchen tap of the one of the food premises returned positive for *Salmonella enteritidis*. From the inspection it was determined that the food premises was operating on untreated bore water, which was considered non-potable.

The investigation identified numerous licenced food premises in the Shire are on private water supplies, without any water treatment system and as such may be considered non-potable water supplies.

In accordance with the *Food Standards Code*, food premises that are not connected to a town water supply must ensure potable water is used in the food premises (Potable water is safe drinking water that is fit for human consumption).

The following steps must be completed to renew your next food business licence and to ensure the water is safe to use in the food business:

1. Install an effective water treatment system, such a system may include filters, UV, ozone, chlorine. Maintain and monitor the water treatment system. This a mandatory requirement and licence may not renewed without evidence of a water treatment system.

Have your water tested annually for *E.coli*, pH and turbidity, from a NATA accredited laboratory. The results of this test must meet the levels listed in the *Australian Drinking Water Quality Guidelines*. Council's Environmental Health Officer will continue to take additional samples and test them for coliforms and *E.coli* as a supplement to the NATA accredited potable water testing.

3. Submit a simple **Water Management Plan** showing:
  - A description of your water system with a flowchart of the storage, pipelines, pumps etc;
  - Procedures for operation, monitoring and routine maintenance;
  - A Risk Management Plan showing possible risks and the action you will take should these risks eventuate.

**Remember:**

Your water test report must current and forwarded to Council before you renew your food business licence, with your Water Management Plan.

- Contact the NATA accredited laboratory to find out where, when and how to collect water samples. You must also be mindful that there is a strict time frame of delivering these samples to the laboratory.
- Do not forget to clean out your tanks regularly. Speak to your plumber and/or water treatment specialist.

For further information on water quality refer to the Australian Drinking Water Guidelines: [www.nhmrc.gov.au](http://www.nhmrc.gov.au)

## CLEANING AND SANITISING

You have an obligation as a food business under the *Food Standards Code* to ensure the following equipment is in a clean and sanitary condition:

1. Eating and drinking utensils; and
2. The food contact surfaces of equipment.

*A 'clean and sanitary condition' means, in relation to a surface or utensil, the condition of a surface or utensil is clean; and has applied to it heat or chemicals, heat and chemicals, or other processes, so that the number of microorganisms on the surface or utensil has been reduced to a level that –*

- *Does not compromise the safety of the food with which it may come into contact; and*
- *Does not permit the transmission of infectious disease.*

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/slab mixers and reusable piping bags)

When using a food grade sanitiser, it is important to follow the manufacturer's specific instructions and directions, which may include dilution rate, shelf life after dilution and contact surface times. Ensure your spray bottle has informative label so that the user can these instructions and directions and prevent any food safety and/or health and safety issues.



## FOOD SAFETY IS YOUR RESPONSIBILITY AND YOUR BUSINESS

All food businesses are required to ensure people who work in their business have skills and knowledge appropriate to the type of work they do.

This includes:

- [Food handlers](#)
- [Food safety supervisors](#)
- Please visit Council's website: [I'm Alert Food Safety Training — Cook Shire Council](#) to assess the Online Free Food Safety Training for your staff.

## SEWAGE AND WASTE WATER DISPOSAL



**Q** – Do you have a valid Trade Waste Permit from Cook Shire Council?

**A** – If No, Contact Cook Shire Council Trade Waste Officer

**Q** – How effective is your sewage and waste water disposal?

**A** – For disposal to be effective, all sewage and waste water must be:

- Conveyed from all buildings on the site so as not to cause ponding or backflow into the building

- Disposed of in a way that does not jeopardise food safety on-site
- Disposed of in accordance with statutory requirements (including environmental requirements).

**A** – Constructed and located so that there is no likelihood of the sewage and waste water polluting the water supply or contaminating food. Drainage pipes, grease arrestors, drain inlets and access openings, and on-site sewage treatment plants must be located where there is no risk of them contaminating the water supply or food.

**A** – The standard of workmanship overall must ensure that the disposal system is not likely to leak, block, overflow or allow access by vermin into the food premises.

For more information or if you require assistance on food safety matters, get in touch:

✉ [mail@cook.qld.gov.au](mailto:mail@cook.qld.gov.au)

☎ (07) 4082 0500.



**Cook Shire**  
**COUNCIL**