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17 October 2014

Dear Food Handler

**RE: FOOD SAFETY NEWSLETTER**

Welcome to our first newsletter for food businesses, which includes sporting and community groups conducting food activities.

***Does your business, home business, online business, sporting club or community group sell food or handle food intended for sale, including fundraising?***

Council undertakes food safety inspections, as the relevant authority, to assess that premises are complying with the SA Food Act 2001, the SA Food Regulations 2002 and Chapter 3 of the Australia New Zealand Food Standards Code (Food Safety Standards). Below is a list of trending non-compliances during the last financial year.

Does your business comply with the following?

- **Hand washing facilities** (*\*conditions may apply to temporary events*) – warm running water, soap and single use towel must be provided and used. The basin must be clearly signed for handing washing only. (*\*refer to the Food Safety Standards*)
- **Cleanliness of premises, fittings, and equipment** – must be kept clean to minimise the likelihood of food becoming contaminated and to discourage pests.
- **Probe thermometer** – should measure in 1°C increments, be accurate, correctly sanitised and inserted into food/drink to accurately measure core temperature.
- **Food grade sanitising** – any surface that has direct contact with food must undergo a compliant food grade sanitising process, this includes, utensils, crockery, chopping boards, pots, containers, benches etc. This can be done using a dishwasher if a cycle reaches 65°C or above, or a compliant chemical using a 3 step process (wash, rinse and food grade sanitise) unless the manufacturer's instructions direct otherwise. Contact times, mixing ratios, diluted shelf life and correct procedures must be known by responsible staff.

For further information see the reverse side of the enclosed fact sheet or Council's website ([www.mountgambier.sa.gov.au](http://www.mountgambier.sa.gov.au)).

**Additional food safety topics that maybe checked during inspections:**

- **Food Safety Standards** – Chapter 3 of the Food Safety Standards should be available onsite for the responsible food handlers (every shift/event). This document contains the rules in which they should be aware of and operate by. This may be requested during inspections. This is available through a link on Council's website.
- **Notification** – 'A food business must, before the food business commences any food handling operations, notify the appropriate enforcement agency'. A food business is defined under the Food Safety Standards as:

'a business, enterprise or activity (other than primary food production) that involves:

- a) The handling of food intended for sale, or
- b) The sale of food,

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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.

Please note the above definition captures food activities such as fundraising BBQ's, preparation of food in homes for sale at market stalls or to local cafes, online food businesses and off-site catering activities. Please note that it is a legal requirement for you to keep your Food Business Notification up-to-date with Council. If you are unsure if your activity is classed as a food business, of your FBN number or if your details are up-to-date you can contact Council.

- **Power failure procedure** – food safety compliance must be met at ALL times during operation and includes unusual operating circumstances eg emergencies/power failures. Temperature control must be maintained and monitored with probe thermometer. It is recommended the incident is documented with temperature control actions and any disposal of food.

Food grade sanitising may be affected if dishwashers are usually used to meet this requirement. A complying food grade chemical must be used until the dishwasher is operational. This is also required in the event the dishwasher is out of service (broken) or no longer used.

- **Safe drinking water** – a reminder if water other than SA mains (eg bore or rainwater) is to be used for food preparation (including washing vegetables, hand washing, cleaning benches that have direct contact with food etc) further information on the SA Safe Drinking Water Act 2011 can be found on our website.
- **Display of unpackaged ready-to-eat (RTE) foods on counters & bars (including market stalls) accessible by customers** – a food business must not display for sale on any counter or bar, any RTE food (e.g. muffins, cakes, bread) unless it is enclosed, contained or wrapped so that the food is protected from likely contamination. Please note mesh covers do not provide adequate protection from contamination from airborne particulates i.e. coughing or sneezing from customers.
- **Pest control** – is it time to check the fly wire on windows and doors, refuse storage areas and review your pest control measures?
- **Local food safety training options** – TAFE SA is running a series of accredited food safety training sessions for local food businesses and organisations (see attached). The last session for 2014 in Mount Gambier is being held from **3:00-6.30pm on Wednesday, 12<sup>th</sup> November 2014**. The City of Mount Gambier supports this important initiative to address the needs of local food handlers and enhance the level of professionalism and food safety in the region. Participants can register their interest or gain further information by contacting TAFE SA, Kadina Campus, on (08) 8821 0400.

It may be useful to share this newsletter and discuss the above topics with all of your food handlers as a breach may be considered a serious non-compliance during an inspection. While Council endeavours to provide comprehensive advice, the onus is on the operator to familiarise themselves with their legal obligations and act accordingly.

Food business notification (FBN) forms and further food safety fact sheets are available on Council's website or office. If you require any further information please contact Council during business hours on 8721 2530 or visit [www.mountgambier.sa.gov.au](http://www.mountgambier.sa.gov.au).

Yours sincerely,

The Environmental Health Team



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Enc. Food Safety Training Fact Sheet