

NOVEMBER 2020 | SPRING EDITION

# FOOD SAFETY NEWSLETTER

Welcome to the Spring Edition of the Limestone Coast Food Safety Newsletter. This edition marks the fifth collaboration between the Limestone Coast Councils.

## IN FOCUS THIS EDITION:

- Australian Food Safety Week (Refer to Attachment)
- Mops & Wastewater
- Food Storage
- Exhaust Canopies & Fire Safety
- Toxins in Seafood (Refer to Attachment - Courtesy of City of Hume)
- Cross Border Travel Update



## AUSTRALIAN FOOD SAFETY WEEK

14 - 21 November 2020

The Food Safety Information Council facilitates Australian Food Safety Week 2020 which commences on 14 November 2020. The theme will be **'Food Safety - it's in your hands'** where the aim is to build upon the good consumer behaviour established during the COVID-19 pandemic.

According to the National Notifiable Disease Network monthly rates of salmonellosis, campylobacteriosis and STEC, like other infectious diseases, have reduced since the pandemic began, possibly due to improved handwashing and social distancing practices.

**Refer to the attachment for more information.**

## Buffets & Salad Bars

Expectations have been clarified by SAPOL on communal food & beverage service areas. These areas, including buffet & salad bars, can operate as long as there is **NO** self-service by patrons.

Customers can identify their selections from a buffet and a staff member from the venue must do the plating of the selection. Venues are responsible for appropriately managing any queues to ensure physical distancing. Self-service is still not allowed, i.e. where guests select and serve themselves using communal utensils and from shared plates and platters.

COVID safe plans should include this detail when they are next updated.

**Australian Food Safety Week**  
14-21 November 2020

*Food safety - it's in your hands*

Facility supported by  
**Highfield**  
e-learning  
[www.highfieldelearning.com.au](http://www.highfieldelearning.com.au)

For more information visit  
[www.foodsafety.asn.au](http://www.foodsafety.asn.au)

**FOOD SAFETY**  
INFORMATION  
COUNCIL

# FOOD STORAGE

## Guidance Information

### **STORAGE TIPS FOR FOOD & INGREDIENTS**

- Keep unpackaged ready-to-eat (RTE) food separate from raw foods. RTE foods stored above raw foods can help prevent contamination from such things as blood drip
- Make sure no food or food container is in direct contact with the floor
- Keep all food away from chemicals, damaged equipment or areas of the premises which require maintenance (eg flaking paint)
- Clean up spills or breakages (eg. glass) as soon as possible

### **GENERAL FOOD SAFETY**

Examples of how to keep food safe include:

- protecting food from contamination from splashing, drips, other foods, allergens, or odours
- pet meat is labelled and stored separately from food for human consumption
- any food that is unsafe or unsuitable that has been recalled, or that needs to be returned to the supplier, must be labelled and stored separately from other foods



## EXHAUST CANOPIES & FIRE SAFETY

**Food premises are susceptible to fires which may start in or spread to the exhaust canopies from cooking equipment.**

Exhaust canopies over cooking equipment can have a grease build-up, which holds food and other particles to the surface. This leads to the filters becoming clogged and a coating of grease and fat building up on the inside and outside surfaces of the canopy.

It is very important to ensure that the exhaust canopy above cooking equipment in any food premises is routinely cleaned, as well as surfaces between the cooking equipment and exhaust canopy.

The cleaning schedule should include the whole exhaust system including:

- the internal and external surface of the canopy
- the exhaust filters
- the condensation gutter
- any light fittings
- the ductwork

While some of the above can be cleaned by the business, some of the more difficult areas to access (such as ductwork) should be cleaned by specialist trades people.

The type and quantity of cooking will affect how often you need to clean your ductwork. Annually may be sufficient for most businesses. However, some premises (such as charcoal chicken shops) will require more regular cleaning, possibly as often as every six months.

Ensure your cleaning regime is in accordance with your insurance policy.

It's not just about being clean, it's also about the safety of you, your staff and your business.



# KNOW YOUR BACTERIA

## Toxins in Seafood

(Refer to attachment for more Information)



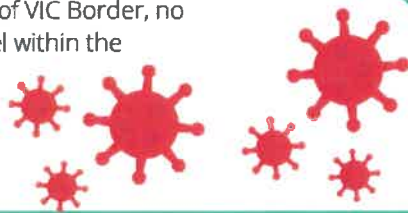
## CROSS BORDER TRAVEL UPDATE

Effective from 24 October 2020

As the Limestone Coast business activities often involve cross border movement, we considered it beneficial to include the latest details....

The key changes include:

- People in Victoria who are genuinely relocating to SA will be permitted to enter after approval.
- People in Victoria who are genuinely moving to SA for extended work purposes are permitted to enter.
- 70km corridor for Cross Border Community members, now 70km East and West of VIC Border, no reason to travel within the corridor.



### Mops & Wastewater...



Dirty mop water or liquid waste is not to be disposed of in food preparation, scullery or handwash sinks. Dispose wastewater responsibly, and not into stormwater drains. Best practice is to use a plumbed in cleaners sink for mop water. If this is not available contact your EHO to discuss your best option. Water contaminated with grease, oil and fat must be handled correctly to prevent environmental pollution and build up pipes resulting blockage. Pollution to ground can cause harm to the environment and maybe considered a breach under the Local Nuisance and Litter Control Act 2016. Mops should be cleaned and air dried between use to help reduce the spread of bacteria which likes moisture.



City of Mount Gambier



District Council of



Wattle Range COUNCIL

District Council of



## Australian Food Safety Week 2020

Lydia Buchtman - Communication Director, Food Safety Information Council

The Food Safety Information Council is a health promotion charity and our role is to educate the community in safe food handling so we can reduce the estimated 4.1 million cases of foodborne disease in Australia each year. We were founded in 1997 and our members include state and territory governments, local government authorities, CSIRO, Food Standards Australia New Zealand, OzFoodNet, Choice, the Dietitians Association of Australia and industry groups. Each year we hold Australian Food Safety Week in November and smaller educational campaigns each month.

We will be holding Australian Food Safety Week 2020 from 14 to 21 November 2020. The theme will be *'Food Safety - it's in your hands'* where we will be building upon the good consumer behaviour established during the COVID-19 pandemic so we can continue to reduce the amount of foodborne disease. According to the National Notifiable Disease Network monthly rates of salmonellosis, campylobacteriosis and STEC, like other infectious diseases, have reduced since the pandemic began, possibly due to improved handwashing and social distancing practices.

In particular we want to help young people better understand about food safety for both their health and for helping their future employment opportunities. We have partnered with educational company First for Training to make online food safety basic training courses affordable and available as well as meeting our long term aim of getting course material into schools. First for Training will be making a charitable donation of 10% of course sales to the Food Safety Information Council to help us keep our important work going. Schools and councils can access the First For Training resources from early October via [www.firstfortraining.com.au](http://www.firstfortraining.com.au) and by emailing [info@firstfortraining.com.au](mailto:info@firstfortraining.com.au)

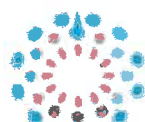
We greatly appreciated the involvement of local government and EHOs in Australian Food Safety Week 2019 *'Excellent Eggs - handle them safely'* which was a great success. National Omnipoll research found that 24% Australian adults recall hearing egg safety messages over the Summer which equals approximately 5 million Australians.



We recognise that Australian Food Safety Week events will be more of a challenge this year with restrictions on community events because of social distancing probably continuing. To inspire the community, schools and local councils to publicise Australian Food Safety Week we will be offering prizes for some of the most innovative ideas.

We would love Environmental Health Australia members to get involved and you can register your event, access our community package and find out more about the training courses at <https://foodsafety.asn.au/australian-food-safety-week-2020/> or contact us by email at [info@foodsafety.asn.au](mailto:info@foodsafety.asn.au) or call 0407 626 688. You can also find out about becoming a member here <https://foodsafety.asn.au/members-supporters-sponsors/>

In the lead up to Australian Food Safety Week we will also be conducting a smaller education campaign in September calling on the sale of unregulated food on social media platforms like Facebook Marketplace to be stopped and to warn consumers not to buy it because of the safety risk. This will be followed with our annual handwashing campaign to be launched on Global Handwashing Day on 15 October where we will be releasing the findings of national research to see if, since last year, people have improved their handwashing behaviour. The research, sponsored by our members Ecolab and ACCORD, will also be asking about the frequency of use of hand sanitiser.



**FOOD SAFETY** INFORMATION COUNCIL

# Know your bacteria



## TOXINS IN SEAFOOD

### What toxins can be associated with seafood?

- Amnesic shellfish toxin
- Diarrhoetic shellfish toxin
- Neurotoxic shellfish toxin
- Paralytic shellfish toxin
- Ciguatoxins
- Histamine

### What illness does it cause?

- Amnesic shellfish poisoning, diarrhoetic shellfish poisoning, neurotoxic shellfish poisoning and paralytic shellfish poisoning are caused by the respective shellfish toxins listed above.
- Ciguatera (or ciguatera fish poisoning) is caused by ciguatoxins.
- Scombroid fish poisoning is caused by histamine.
- None of these illnesses are nationally notifiable and don't need to be reported to health authorities unless there is an outbreak.

### What are the symptoms?

#### Amnesic shellfish poisoning

Symptoms include nausea, vomiting, abdominal cramps, diarrhoea, headaches, confusion and seizures and usually begin within one or two days of eating toxic shellfish.

The illness can be severe and cause coma and death.

#### Diarrhoetic shellfish poisoning

Symptoms include nausea, vomiting, abdominal cramps, diarrhoea and headache and start within 30 minutes to 15 hours of eating toxic shellfish.

The illness usually lasts up to three days.

#### Neurotoxic shellfish poisoning

Symptoms include numbness and tingling of lips, fingers and toes, nausea, vomiting and diarrhoea.

The illness usually only lasts a few days.

#### Paralytic shellfish poisoning

Symptoms are similar to neurotoxic shellfish poisoning (see above) but more severe and begin half an hour to two hours after eating toxic shellfish.

The illness can be serious and cause paralysis, respiratory problems and death.

#### Ciguatera fish poisoning

Symptoms include tingling and numbness in fingers, toes and face, burning sensation or pain on contact with cold water; joint and muscle pains and weakness; nausea, vomiting, diarrhoea, headache, fatigue and fainting. In severe cases, respiratory problems and paralysis can occur. Symptoms start between 1 and 48 hours after eating toxic fish.

Gastrointestinal symptoms usually last a few days but neurological symptoms may last several weeks or months.

#### Scombroid fish poisoning

Symptoms include a peppery or metallic taste, flushing of the upper body, itching, headache, dizziness, vomiting, diarrhoea and abdominal cramps and start 30 minutes to a few hours after eating toxic fish and last a day or two. In severe cases, people can have difficulty breathing and low blood pressure.

#### Who can get sick?

Anyone who eats contaminated fish or shellfish.

#### Where do these toxins come from?

The four shellfish toxins listed are produced by certain marine algae. These toxins can build up in shellfish as they feed on the algae, especially during algal blooms (or 'red tides'). Common shellfish that can be contaminated with these toxins include clams, oysters, mussels, scallops and crabs.

Ciguatoxins come from marine algae that are eaten by fish in and around coral reefs. These toxins build up and become more potent in the bigger fish that feed on contaminated smaller ones. Fish that can contain ciguatoxins include Chinaman fish, red bass, some wrasse, tropical snappers and coral trout.

Histamine is produced by bacteria in particular types of fish (usually in the Scombridae and Scomberesocidae families). When these fish are not properly chilled (straight after capture or in storage before eating) the bacteria can grow and produce high amounts of histamine. Fish that can contain histamine include mackerel, tuna, sardines, anchovy and marlin.

#### How can people get sick?

- by eating contaminated fish and shellfish
- by eating fish that has not been properly chilled.

Cooking or freezing seafood will not remove the toxins.

#### How can illness be prevented?

- Buy seafood from a trusted supplier
- Keep seafood cold (5°C or colder) – refrigerate immediately after buying it; if it's frozen, thaw it in the fridge; and if you catch your own fish, chill it on ice immediately.
- Avoid eating large fish from warm ocean waters, especially the head, roe or organs.
- If harvesting shellfish or reef fish yourself, check with local authorities which species and waters are safe for harvesting.

Source: [foodstandards.gov.au](http://foodstandards.gov.au)