

Town of Gawler Food Inspections and Auditing



Food safety

Food businesses are comprised of restaurants, takeaways, deli's, green grocers, markets, cafes, bakeries, sporting clubs, childcare centres, family daycare centres, community groups and many more.

Council's Environmental Health Officers are authorised under the Food Act 2001, Food Safety Standards and Food Regulations 2002 to regulate the sale of safe and suitable food. Environmental Health Officers also:

- Conduct routine inspections of food premises
- Provide a food safety program auditing service (Department of Health Approved Auditor)
- Respond to food complaints and food poisoning cases
- Provide education and guidance in food safety & food auditing
- Assist the Department of Health with food recalls

Food premises inspections

Environmental Health Officers (EHO's) are dedicated to providing food handlers with advice and education for compliance with the Food Safety Standards. Food businesses are inspected in and inspection fees are charged in line with Food Act 2001 Regulations. EHO's use the Australian Food Safety Assessment for inspecting food premises, which covers the following food activities:

- Receiving, storage and processing
- Display and packaging
- Transportation and distribution
- Health and hygiene
- Premises hygiene

Auditing of food safety programs

The Department of Health has established the framework in which food safety programs, auditing and auditors are managed. Development of the auditor workforce is continuing with training completed and progression through the auditor competencies required by RABQSA National Food Safety Auditor Certification Scheme. To view a list of the Department of Health approved auditors register visit our Approved Auditor Register page.

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Foreign object in food complaint

If you have discovered that a food you have purchased has an object in it which is not part of the listed ingredients:

- Do not remove the foreign object
- Wrap the remainder of the food in the original wrapping or in a material which will not contaminate the food
- Place the food, if perishable in the fridge or freezer
- Keep the receipt of the food
- Record the date of purchase; where the food was stored when it was first brought home; when the foreign object was first sighted; details of anyone who has consumed any part of the food

An Environmental Health Officer (EHO) will take appropriate action based on the information gained from the above points.

Food poisoning complaints

A common misconception amongst sufferers of food poisoning is that their illness was due to the last food they consumed. While the onset of symptoms can occur as short as 1 hr following consumption of food, generally symptoms appear between 8-12 hours, but may also take as long as 4 days. Food poisoning symptoms generally consist of one or more of the following; nausea, vomiting, diarrhoea, stomach cramps, dizziness, fever and dehydration.

Food poisoning is generally caused as a result of consuming 'potentially hazardous' foods which have not been maintained under temperature control or have been contaminated in some way. Potentially hazardous foods are foods such as raw and cooked meats, dairy products, seafood, processed fruits and vegetables, cooked rice and pasta, foods containing eggs, beans, nuts, or other protein rich foods.

If you suspect that you have food poisoning, visit your doctor and ask that a faecal sample be taken to be microbiologically analysed for food poisoning bacteria. If you have food remaining from the suspected source, ensure that it is stored in a way that will not alter the composition of the food. Eg in most cases it would be necessary to freeze the food to prevent spoilage. If you are unsure how to store the food contact Council's Environmental Health Officer.

If the results of the faecal sample are positive for food poisoning bacteria you may be asked to fill out a Food History Questionnaire to determine any potential food sources. Any remaining alleged food source may also be microbiologically tested.

Based on the information obtained from the food poisoning sufferer an inspection of the suspected food business may be conducted. However, specific action cannot be taken without sufficient evidence linking a food source and food business with the food poisoning bacteria detected from the sufferer.