

Food Safety Newsletter

Winter 2024

Welcome

Welcome to the City of Rockingham's food safety newsletter. This newsletter aims to provide up-to-date food safety and regulatory information to food handlers and food businesses within the City. Please contact customer@rockingham.wa.gov.au if you have any feedback or suggestions for future editions of the food safety newsletter.

Topics



Enforcement of Food Safety Standard 3.2.2A



Shelf life of ingredients in food businesses



Storage and use-by directions on food packaging



Recent prosecution of a Rockingham food business



Why use food-grade sanitisers?



Food allergen declarations



rockingham.wa.gov.au



Enforcement of Food Safety Standard 3.2.2A

Food Safety Standard 3.2.2A is now being enforced Australia-wide. A penalty may apply for non-compliance with the Food Standards Code if your business does not meet the requirements of the Standard at your next inspection.

If your food business handles unpackaged, potentially hazardous and ready-to-eat food, you will now need to demonstrate that:

1. A Food Safety Supervisor has been appointed, who:

- is formally trained – required competencies and approved Registered Training Organisations are available at: **health.wa.gov.au/Articles/F_I/Food-Safety-Supervisor-Training-Course**
- has a supervisor's certificate available
- can give advice to people who make food
- is reasonably available (onsite a majority of the time when food is being prepared). Businesses with multiple premises must have one Food Safety Supervisor appointed for each site, if the FSS cannot effectively provide supervision across multiple premises/sites as described.

2. Food handlers have been trained in:

- safe handling of food
- food contamination
- cleaning and sanitising equipment
- personal hygiene.

The following courses are recognised by the Department of Health (WA) as meeting the above requirements:

- I'm Alert Food Safety Training and FoodSafe Online (available in English, Vietnamese and Simplified Chinese). Training is free and available at: **rockingham.wa.gov.au/foodsafetytraining**
- DoFoodSafely – **dofoodsafely.health.vic.gov.au** available in English, Chinese, Vietnamese, Korean, Hindi, Nepali and Punjabi.

The best way to demonstrate that food handlers have received training is to keep training certificates at the premises.

3. Key food safety controls are being managed (Category One businesses) e.g. temperature control of food during receipt, storage, processing. This is best demonstrated via record keeping.

Suitable templates can be found at Safe Food Australia (Appendix 8) **foodstandards.gov.au/publications/safeaustralia**

Records should be kept for a minimum of three months to show that food handling staff are consistently ensuring food is safe.

If you have any questions regarding the requirements of Standard 3.2.2A, contact Health Services at the City of Rockingham on **9528 0333**.



Shelf life of ingredients in food businesses

To prevent a foodborne illness outbreak, food businesses should have systems in place to ensure that food products are rotated and not sold to customers beyond their recommended shelf life.

For raw ingredients and products that have not been removed from packaging, refer to shelf life guidelines from the manufacturer or supplier.

Potentially hazardous food, as a general guide, should not be kept beyond five days, but this shelf life is shorter for high-risk products such as poultry, mince or seafood. Food containing raw egg or partially cooked egg should be disposed of after 24 hours. Food that has been pre-cooked should be treated as leftovers and not kept longer than three to five days, depending on the product.

Refer to scientific or government publications such as [csiro.au/en/research/health-medical/nutrition/food-handling](https://www.csiro.au/en/research/health-medical/nutrition/food-handling) for more detailed food shelf life advice.

Storage and use-by directions on food packaging

Food premises inspections by Environmental Health Officers (EHOs) have found some food businesses have failed to follow storage and use-by instructions on food packaging for potentially hazardous food. For example, products have been found in the refrigerator when the storage instructions specified 'keep frozen'. Products were found to not have been labelled with a new use-by date when packaging specified a use-by date 'once defrosted' or 'once opened'.

Storage and use-by directions on food packaging must be followed to ensure that food is safe until the use-by date as specified by the manufacturer. Aside from compromising food safety, failure to follow these instructions may also result in premature spoilage or quality issues for the product.

It is the responsibility of the food business to ensure all food sold is safe and suitable.

Recent prosecution of a Rockingham food business

City EHOs attempt to work with food businesses to ensure compliance with the Food Act 2008 and Food Safety Standards.

Where ongoing food safety issues are identified, the City will prosecute food businesses. Fines can be substantial, with a recent prosecution costing a food business \$40,000.

All successful prosecutions of food businesses are listed on the WA Department of Health website for two years at [health.wa.gov.au/Articles/F_I/Food-offenders/Publication-of-names-of-offenders-list](https://www.health.wa.gov.au/Articles/F_I/Food-offenders/Publication-of-names-of-offenders-list)

Why use food-grade sanitisers?

Contamination of food with harmful levels of food poisoning bacteria can cause a foodborne illness outbreak and potentially result in penalties and reputational damage for your business. The use of food-grade sanitisers in conjunction with cleaning ensures that potentially harmful food poisoning bacteria is not spread throughout the kitchen, which can prevent customers from getting sick.

City EHOs have repeatedly encountered the following issues during inspections:

- Staff at food businesses do not know the difference between cleaning and sanitising.
- Sanitiser is not being diluted at the correct rate as specified by the manufacturer.
- No sanitising step is being implemented for food contact surfaces, utensils or equipment.

Steps for cleaning and sanitising

Thorough cleaning of surfaces is required prior to sanitising, for sanitisers to be effective.

Step 1 – cleaning

1. Scrape off food scraps and rinse with water.
2. Wash with hot water and detergent to remove food residue and grease.
3. Rinse surface.

Step 2 – sanitising

1. Use a dishwasher on the hottest setting with the appropriate detergent and sanitising chemical, or

2. Apply chemical sanitiser according to the manufacturer's instructions.
3. Air dry the surfaces.

Sanitising tips

- No-rinse sanitiser is best as staff will not be required to rinse surfaces after application of the chemical.
- Where a chemical must be diluted from the bottle, ensure that a measuring cup/syringe and spray bottle of known volume is available so that the product can be diluted correctly.
- For sanitising of dishes in the sink, ensure that the volume of the sink is known so that staff know how much water and how much sanitiser to add. Keep sanitiser dilution instructions in a visible location as a reminder for staff.
- Always follow storage instructions for diluted sanitiser e.g. some brands require the diluted chemical to be disposed of after 24 hours as it is no longer effective.



Food allergen declarations

Food businesses have an obligation to comply with legislative requirements regarding allergen declarations for food produced by the business. This includes ensuring that food does not contain specific allergens if requested by the customer.

Food handling and food service staff should receive training to become familiar with the menu and ingredients, to ensure that products containing common allergens can be identified and declared to the customer. Training should also cover topics such as allergen management during food storage, food processing and cleaning of the kitchen.

Food handling or service staff may be requested to demonstrate allergen management knowledge and procedures during an inspection by an Environmental Health Officer.

Free allergen management training and resources can be accessed at:

health.wa.gov.au/Articles/F_I/Food-allergen-declarations-for-food-businesses