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PROJECT

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FOOD SAFETY AND HYGIENE

Food Safety and Hygiene

Introduction:

Food handling is a common practice in organisation. Whether it be the preparation of daily preparation of meals for staff or the needy, or catering for an annual fund-raising event the same basic food safety rules apply in every situation.

Room and Layout:

Any room where food is handled should be large enough to ensure that food can be handled safely. In all situations, there must be adequate ventilation in the room. Opening an operable window, fitted with a fly screen if needed, or using an extractor fan are two ways ventilation can be assured.

The design and layout of the room should help to prevent cross-contamination of bacteria between raw foods and 'ready-to-eat' products.

Consideration should be given to the flow of food items around the kitchen, including raw/uncooked, refrigerated, frozen and cooked food. Also consider where waste containers are located, and where washing up takes place, as these can also lead to inadvertent contamination of food.

In addition to a separate wash hand basin, kitchens should be fitted with a double-bowl sink or a combination of a single-bowl sink and a dishwasher as a minimum standard.

Where regular vegetable preparation is carried out, an additional sink might be required to separate this from cleaning activities. A single sink would usually be acceptable for smaller kitchens used for preparing light refreshments only.

Kitchens need to be fitted with a hand washing sink which is supplied with hot and cold running water, soap and clean towels (paper hand towels are often recommended over cloth towels or hot-air dryers).

The ceiling, walls, floor and all work surfaces must be in a good state of repair and made so that they can be effectively cleaned.

- Ceilings should be smooth and impervious.
- Walls should be smooth, impervious and of a light colour. In many cases, smooth painted plaster would be acceptable, but tiles can be easier to clean.
- A tiled splash back should be considered behind sinks, cookers and preparation surfaces to enable easy cleaning.
- Floors should be easy to clean with slip resistant vinyl sheet/tiles or ceramic tiles.
- Work surfaces need to be suitably hardwearing and easily cleaned. Many

commercially available worktops would suffice. For light-use only, a domestic kitchen surface might be adequate. All surfaces need to be suitably sealed around the edges and joints to prevent food accumulation, which can lead to bacterial or mould growth.

Food Hazard Analysis

A Hazard analysis is similar to a Risk Assessment used in other areas of Health and Safety. It is a way of identifying activities and steps that are important to food safety (known as 'critical control points'). From this assessment, you can ensure that you have adequate controls in place to prevent contamination.

The analysis involves a look through each step of the process from buying foodstuffs through storage, cooking, serving and storing prepared foods along with any other steps in-between. Hazards may come from bacteria, chemicals or physical problems like broken glass in food.

Controls can then be put into place to reduce the risk. These include cleaning, temperature controls and storing food appropriately. You also need to monitor what you are doing. Making visual checks, taking temperature measurements and using cleaning schedules are just a few monitoring activities.

The cooking of food is a critical control point. A Hazard Analysis for cooking would have the following components:

1. Critical Control Point: Cooking
2. Hazard: Survival of bacteria
3. Control: Ensure adequate cooking
4. Monitoring: Check cooking times and check food temperature

For more information, please refer to the Australian Standards for Food Safety.

Protective Clothing:

People handling and preparing foods must wear suitable protective clothing, such as aprons, gloves sometimes may be worn if necessary.

Unlike personal protective equipment, this clothing is to prevent the food becoming contaminated, although it does often double-up to prevent food getting into contact with clothing.

- Jewellery can present a contamination risk and should be removed by food handlers.
- It is good practice for food handlers with long hair to securely tie hair back.
- Any cuts on the skin should be protected using a brightly coloured plaster

Temperature Control:

Temperature control is important in preventing food poisoning, either by killing

bacteria through cooking or reducing the multiplication of bacteria through refrigeration.

Refrigerator Temperature must be set so that high-risk foods are kept below 8°C. Freezer temperatures should be below -18°C. Fridges and freezers should be regularly checked to make sure that they are maintaining the required temperature, and that there is no build up of ice in freezers or freezer compartments.

A Food-probe Thermometer is a useful tool for monitoring temperatures in refrigerators and to make sure food has been cooked thoroughly. Probes must be disinfected after use and records about disinfection kept.

- As a guide, foods requiring thorough cooking to the centre should reach 70°C for two minutes, 75°C for 30 seconds or 80°C for six seconds.
- Many bought products designed for reheating come with instructions for heating and serving. If these instructions are followed, the above temperature checks may be substituted for manufacturer's recommendation. Similarly, if it is obvious that something is hot (such as a simmering gravy), again the temperature checks can be waived.
- 'Safe' foods such as vegetables are often not subject to temperature checks.

Record Keeping:

It is essential to keep certain records that can be referred to at a later date.

- A record of what food items were bought from a wholesalers and supermarket might be as simple as keeping an invoice or receipt.
- A record of temperature checks and servicing of equipment (including fridges, freezers, ovens, microwaves, coffee machine, grinders, other general appliances) does need to be kept.

Records of temperature checks on a refrigerator or freezer, should include:

- The date of the check and the temperature measured,
- When testing refrigerated or frozen food, record what kind of food was tested.
- Corrective action taken, such as adjusting a freezer temperature, should any temperature not be within acceptable limits.

Cleaning and Disinfecting:

Cleaning is the process where visible dirt, grease and food debris is removed. Washing-up liquid in combination with the action of a cloth gives the

antibacterial properties needed for cleaning.

Disinfection is the process where bacteria's are reduced to safe limits.

Sanitizers are a combination of cleaners and disinfectants.

In a kitchen, food-safe cleaning chemicals should be used to avoid contaminating or tainting foods.

- Frequent hand washing and hand sanitizing
- The use of gloves to be worn when serving the public
- Food service to be with utensils and distributed as covid restrictions allow
- When using cleaning chemicals, always follow the instructions on the container. Some chemicals might require additional precautions; see the instructions of use with each product
- To assist with cleaning, food equipment and utensils should be made of smooth, non-absorbent materials that are free from spaces where food could be trapped.
- Cleaning should be done regularly and all items must be cleaned as soon as possible after they have been used.
- Rubbish must be removed from the kitchen regularly to reduce the amount of waste that accumulates in the kitchen. As a rule, bins are to be emptied after each function.

Food Hygiene Training:

All food handlers should be trained to a level that is appropriate to the work that they do.

Volunteers need to be provided with clear instruction and all the appropriate equipment to undertake their food handler duties.

PROJECT Director to have current training in a basic Food Hygiene course, (Level 1 or 2 Food Handling or Food Safety Supervision) and to supervise, or direct the necessary instruction to those who are handling food

Labeling:

It is also important to make sure that information is available for those who ask about allergens.

Allergen-specific foods should be clearly marked and easy for the consumer to identify.

Any labeling that appears on a food item for storage must be must display details of the following:

- The name of the food
- Best before date (frozen foods date to be no longer than 3month

- Allergen specific foods clearly marked
- Where possible a list of ingredients – made available for anyone requiring information