

Food Hygiene and Safety Newsletter

Spring 2014

Chicken livers and food poisoning
Hepatitis E linked to undercooked pork
Gas safety in commercial kitchens
New allergen information and labelling requirements
Is your disinfectant or sanitiser compliant?
Health and safety - it's as simple as ABC
An introduction to your Commercial Team
100% success in food hygiene training
Coffee Break Wordsearch

Chicken livers and Campylobacter food poisoning

In September 2013, the 'Caterer and Hotelkeeper' magazine reported a court case where the owner of a restaurant was ordered to carry out 100 hours unpaid work and pay £1,780 court costs after one of his chefs served undercooked chicken liver pâté to customers at his restaurant. Twenty three people from a party of thirty suffered with campylobacter food poisoning after the chef failed to check that all the pan-fried chicken livers used to make the pâté had been thoroughly cooked. The owner pleaded guilty to serving chicken liver pâté which was unsafe and unfit, and for failing to maintain his food safety management system. On passing sentence, the judge also added that if the incident had resulted in serious injury or death, the owner would have faced a prison sentence.

Campylobacter is the most common cause of food poisoning in the UK. According to the Food Standards Agency, it is considered to be responsible for around 460,000 cases of food poisoning, 22,000 hospitalisations and 110 deaths each year and most of these cases are

associated with poultry. Although campylobacter does not normally grow in food, it spreads easily and has a low infective dose so only a few bacteria in a piece of undercooked chicken, or bacteria transferred from raw chicken onto ready-to-eat foods are needed to cause illness.

Poultry livers carry a particularly high risk of campylobacter as the bacteria can be present throughout the liver not just on the surface. Therefore livers remain a source of infection if they are not cooked sufficiently. Public Health England have revealed that over 90 per cent of campylobacter food poisoning outbreaks at catering venues in 2011 were linked to consumption of chicken or duck liver pâté. Investigations revealed that the livers used to make the pâté were undercooked and remained pink in the centre.

Chefs and caterers are reminded that in order to reduce the risk of campylobacter food poisoning, poultry and especially poultry livers must be thoroughly cooked, and care must be taken to avoid cross-contamination.

100% success in food hygiene training

Seven candidates from local food businesses recently attended a Level Three Award in Food Hygiene (formerly Intermediate Food Hygiene) at Pathfinder House. The course was hosted by Huntingdonshire District Council's Food Safety Team, and delivered by Blue Cloud Training Consultants. The successful students were:

- Lindsay Forrest from Wheatfields School, St Ives
- Rebecca Dagger from One Leisure, St Ives
- Matt Elliot from Piggin' Great Hog Roasts, Ramsey
- Maggie O'Hare from Hinchingsbrooke Country Park, Huntingdon
- Kelly Bedrikovs from Silent Wings Raptor Foundation, Woodhurst
- Maxine Yeowart from Westfield School, St Ives
- Bryony Black from The Bell PH, Gt Paxton.

Our congratulations go to them all.

Health and safety

It's as simple as ABC



AN EASY
GUIDE TO
HEALTH
& SAFETY

The Health and Safety Executive (HSE) has developed a range of tools and guidance to help small and medium sized businesses understand health and safety.

If you run a small or medium sized business look out for the "H&S ABC" logo. When you see it you can be confident that the guidance and the tools have been specifically designed with your type of business in mind and it will help you to avoid unnecessary paperwork and effort.

Go to the HSE website at www.hse.gov.uk/abc where you'll find information about how to get started, how you can control the most common workplace

hazards and how to carry out a simple risk assessment. The resources are interactive and are designed to make businesses think about the hazards in their premises without taking up too much time. The risk assessment templates for small shops and offices are designed to be completed in no more than 20 minutes.

Concentrate on the principles of sensible risk management and don't be fooled by health and safety myths. Take a look at the work of the Myth Busters Challenge Panel at www.hse.gov.uk/myth/index.htm and see how health and safety is often used to explain or defend poor decisions or customer service.

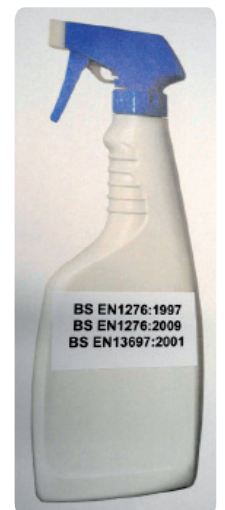
Is the disinfectant or sanitiser you are using compliant with the required British Standard?

Food Business Operators must ensure that the disinfectant or sanitiser being used will effectively remove E coli O157 and other pathogens from food preparation surfaces and equipment. For a disinfectant to be effective in destroying bacteria, the correct dilution and contact time must be followed according to the manufacturer's instructions. There are two officially recognised laboratory standards for assessing the effectiveness of disinfectants against a range of microorganisms, these are: BS EN 1276:1997 or BS EN1276:2009, and BS EN 13697:2001

These standards demonstrate that a disinfectant

is capable of reducing the levels of a range of bacteria, including E coli O157 under a set of specified conditions (e.g. at a particular temperature, dilution and contact time). Food Business Operators must ensure that the disinfectant or sanitiser being used will effectively remove E coli O157 and other pathogens from all surfaces and equipment involved in food preparation.

You can do this by asking your supplier to provide evidence that their cleaning products comply with these standards. You can sometimes see this information on the label and you can also contact the manufacturer for advice.



Hepatitis E linked to the consumption of undercooked pork

The Chartered Institute of Environmental Health have recently highlighted concerns over the service of undercooked or 'pink' pork which may carry a risk of Hepatitis E infection.

Hepatitis E is found all over the world. The particular strain of Hepatitis E virus (HEV) found in the UK infects humans and animals, including pigs and deer. A recent report by DEFRA (the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs) states that there has been an almost 40% increase in the number of cases of human Hepatitis E. The study shows a link between Hepatitis E infections and the consumption of processed pork products. Recent sampling has highlighted that up to 10% of pork sausages purchased from UK retailers contained the Hepatitis E virus.

The Hepatitis E virus usually causes a mild illness and most people recover completely within one to four weeks. However in rare cases it can develop into acute liver failure, which can prove fatal, particularly in pregnant women.

Ways to avoid spreading the Hepatitis E virus infection include:

- Thorough hand washing especially after handling raw pork, and packaging and wrapping materials.
- Thorough cleaning and disinfection of equipment and surfaces that have come into contact with raw pork, packaging and wrapping materials
- Thorough cooking of all pork (i.e. the core temperature reaching 75°C for 30 seconds or equivalent)

Gas safety in commercial kitchens

According to Health and Safety Executive (HSE) statistics, about 11 people die each year from carbon monoxide poisoning caused by faulty gas appliances and flues.

Levels that do not kill can cause serious harm to health if breathed in over a period of time. In extreme cases paralysis and brain damage can be caused as a result of prolonged exposure to carbon monoxide.

Carbon monoxide is produced from the incomplete combustion of carbon based fuels. These include gas, oil, wood, charcoal, propane (LPG), coal and kerosene. Carbon monoxide is a colourless, odourless and tasteless gas.

You can't see, smell or taste carbon monoxide but it can kill quickly and without warning. Taking sensible precautions could dramatically reduce the risk of exposing you and your staff to carbon monoxide.

There are things you can look out for which might indicate incomplete combustion of fuel and the production of carbon monoxide. They include:

- Yellow or orange flames rather than blue flames
- Soot or yellow/brown staining around or on appliances
- Pilot lights that frequently blow out
- Increased condensation inside windows

Early symptoms of carbon monoxide poisoning may easily be confused with many common ailments or simple tiredness. Symptoms to look out for include:

- headaches
 - dizziness
 - breathlessness
 - nausea
 - loss of consciousness
 - tiredness
 - pains in the chest or stomach
 - erratic behaviour
 - visual problems
- If you or your staff experience any

of the above symptoms and believe you may have been exposed to carbon monoxide, you should seek urgent medical advice from either your GP or an A&E department.

There are some simple steps that you can take to keep you and your staff safe, as follows:

- All gas appliances, pipework and safety devices should be inspected, serviced and maintained by a competent person (a Gas Safe registered engineer who is trained to work on commercial gas equipment). The frequency of inspection and servicing will vary depending on the equipment and its use, but should be in line with the manufacturer's recommendations.
- All gas appliances, flues, pipework and safety devices should be regularly cleaned and kept clean.
- All gas appliances and pipework should be checked daily for obvious faults. This will include checking for damage to connections, inoperative flame failure/supervision devices (these shut off the gas supply automatically if the flame goes out), missing restraints on equipment and smells of escaping gas.

- Make-up air must always be provided either in the form of natural ventilation through air vents or louvers, or by ventilation systems providing mechanical make-up air to the kitchen as well as extraction.
- Each fixed appliance should have a single manual means of isolation, known as an 'Emergency Isolation Valve' (EIV).
- Type B gas appliances (for example some combi ovens and deep fat fryers which have a dedicated flue) must be interlocked with a ventilation system which will shut off the gas supply to the appliance if the ventilation system is switched off or fails.

Carbon monoxide detectors can be fitted which give an audible alarm. These can be linked to the automatic gas shut-off system which should be fail-safe and require manual intervention to restore the gas supply. Carbon monoxide detectors should only be regarded as a secondary backup. The primary safeguard must remain the provision of adequate ventilation to ensure complete combustion of gas and removal of combustion products.

Further information on gas safety can be found on the Health and Safety Executive's website www.hse.gov.uk, or the Gas Safe Register website www.gassaferegister.co.uk

Coffee Break Wordsearch

Find the following food-related words and phrases in the grid. Answers can be found on our website.

- Fridge
- Disinfection
- Probe
- Stock rotation
- Food
- Due diligence
- Menu
- Temperature
- Allergy
- Traceability
- EColi
- Contamination

S	Z	O	D	B	A	L	T	S	I	M	J	A	E
T	N	O	I	T	A	N	I	M	A	T	N	O	C
O	Q	U	S	U	B	L	W	E	S	R	O	D	O
C	A	C	I	F	E	U	L	P	V	Y	E	U	L
K	G	M	N	X	R	A	Y	E	T	D	I	E	I
R	L	J	F	U	U	Z	A	U	R	I	G	D	P
O	F	K	E	Y	T	M	V	O	E	G	A	I	T
T	R	A	C	E	A	B	I	L	I	T	Y	L	B
A	I	L	T	K	R	O	Y	T	G	F	S	I	V
T	D	B	I	N	E	M	K	D	F	J	O	G	I
I	G	A	O	Q	P	Z	O	X	O	U	N	E	M
O	E	I	N	O	M	A	B	I	N	O	G	N	T
N	P	R	O	B	E	S	W	P	L	M	F	C	B
L	I	T	F	T	T	R	W	B	I	V	T	E	M

New allergen information and labelling requirements: The Food Information Regulations 2013

At the end of 2014, new legislation will come into force that will require food business operators to provide allergen information about all food that is sold unpackaged. This will include food sold from restaurants, cafes, deli counters, bakeries, sandwich bars, school kitchens, nursing homes, etc.

Allergen information can be shown on the menu, displayed on chalk boards, tickets or in other formats made available to the consumer. The information must be clear, conspicuous, easily visible, and legible. It is possible to provide allergen information verbally upon request, but there is a requirement to provide clear signage to inform customers of this.

It is no longer sufficient for a food business operator to say that they do not know whether or not a food contains an allergen.

The 14 Allergens that must be declared are:

- Cereals containing gluten
- Fish
- Crustaceans
- Eggs

- Soya
- Celery and celeriac
- Sulphur dioxide and sulphites
- Milk
- Mustard
- Lupin
- Molluscs
- Peanuts
- Nuts (almonds, hazelnuts, walnuts, cashews, pecans, brazils, pistachios, macadamia, and Queensland nuts)
- Sesame

To help you to manage allergens in your business you should consider the following:

- Ensure recipes or product specifications are available for all the food that you sell
- Examine the ingredient packaging carefully, especially composite ingredients
- Consider whether any processing aids may contain allergens e.g. cooking oils
- Prepare a chart detailing the allergens in each product
- Collate this information into a Food Allergen Handbook

- Have the Food Allergen Handbook approved by a suitably trained person
- Direct customers to the location of the handbook using clear notices and menus
- Foods substituted on delivery should be carefully checked and allergens noted
- Train staff in food allergy awareness and your food allergen procedures
- Ensure any new products and 'specials' are approved and added to the handbook
- If you can't guarantee that cross contamination with allergens won't happen in your business than you should include the following statement in your Handbook: "As some items on our menu contain, there is a small chance that traces of these allergens might be found in other items on the menu."

Further information is available on the Food Standards Agency's website: www.food.gov.uk

An introduction to your Commercial Team members

Keith Lawson is the Commercial Team Leader. Keith manages the team and carries out health and safety and food hygiene inspections in St Neots, Offord Cluny, Offord Darcy, Great Paxton and Little Paxton.

Suzanne Christie, Senior Environmental Health Officer carrying out food hygiene and health and safety inspections in Huntingdon (outer ring road), Stilton, Stibbington, Wansford and our northern parishes.

Andy Agass, Environmental Health Officer carrying out food hygiene and health and safety inspections in Alconbury, Buckden, Kimbolton, Spaldwick, Wyton, Catworth, Godmanchester,

Hemingfords, Houghton, Hilton, Wyton and surrounding parishes.

Gail Lewis, Environmental Health Officer carrying out food hygiene and health and safety inspections in Abbotsley, Eaton Ford, Eaton Socon and Great Gransden.

Belinda Betham, Environmental Health Protection Officer, carrying out food hygiene and health and safety inspections in St Ives, Ramsey, Earith, Bluntisham, Abbots Ripton, Kings Ripton and surrounding parishes.

Tracey Ibbett, Environmental Health Protection Officer, carrying out food hygiene and health and safety inspections in Huntingdon (inner ring road), Somersham, Needingworth,



Julie, Suzanne, Belinda, Tracey, Gail
Seated: Keith, Paula, Andy

Sawtry, Holywell and Colne.

Julie Fitzsimons, Environmental Health Protection Officer, carrying out food hygiene and health and safety inspections in Farcet, Hartford, Oldhurst, Pidley, Bury, Warboys, Woodhurst and Yaxley.

Paula Croskell, student Environmental Health Officer. Paula will be accompanying us on visits during the coming year.