

Cleaning

Introduction

Food premises need continual cleaning and sanitising to eliminate food poisoning bacteria before they can multiply and spread.

Some areas, equipment and surfaces, particularly food preparation and storage areas, will need more frequent cleaning and sanitation and in some cases specialised procedures may be required.

All premises need a cleaning plan to ensure they are thoroughly cleaned and sanitised.



General Housekeeping

Good housekeeping involves maintaining a clean, tidy workplace and using safe working practices so that safe, clean, wholesome food can be produced.

Unless the equipment and surfaces that come in contact with food are adequately cleaned and sanitised, they may be a prime source of food contamination from bacteria.

Reasons for Cleaning

- To remove material where bacteria can grow, thus reducing the risk of food poisoning and spoilage.
- To allow disinfection of specific equipment and surfaces.
- To remove materials and items that could encourage pest infestation.
- To reduce the risk of foreign matter contamination.
- To provide a safe working environment.
- To promote a good, “well run” image to customers.



Effective cleaning

Food workers must “clean as they go”. Good cleaning equipment is needed and may include vacuum cleaners, mops, buckets, brooms and specialised items such as sanitisers, steam cleaners.

Protective clothing and gloves must be worn where necessary and the chemical manufacturers’ instructions on use and preparation should be followed.

Food must not be exposed to the risk of contamination during cleaning or from chemical storage. After use, the cleaning equipment itself must be cleaned and chemicals stored in a separate area away from food and food preparation areas.

Chemicals must never be put into unmarked containers or old food containers.

Handy hints

- Use combined cleanser/sanitiser as opposed to separate detergents and sanitiser. This will save time and expense.
- Keep the number of chemicals to a minimum to avoid confusion.
- Never mix separate sanitiser and cleaners. At least they may be rendered ineffective, at worst they could become toxic, corrosive, or flammable.
- Ensure that the sanitiser is suitable for the product. Surfaces and equipment that come into direct contact with food should be rinsed off with hot water before use.
- No matter how good the cleaning product, effort and energy from workers is still required to achieve good results.
- For special equipment such as slicers, mixers, etc provide instructions on how the machinery is to be stripped down for effective cleaning.



Cleaning cloths are to be regularly sanitised by boiling for at least 10 minutes, soaking in a sanitiser (bleach), or washing and microwaving for several minutes.

Management

A clean premises requires commitment to hygiene from all staff.

It is essential that all staff are aware of how the cleaning programme works and what their duties are.

A cleaning programme is recognised as an essential food safety tool in providing a control point in limiting potential risks of contamination to food.

The Environmental Health Team recognises this fact through the “Risk Assessment” made of your premises. An effective cleaning programme is one that is being seen to be used on a daily basis, involves all staff, and is being signed off and the record kept.

Use the enclosed example of a generic schedule to design your own programme by substituting your own items to be cleaned and cleaning materials.



What is to be cleaned

Walk through your premises and list everything that requires cleaning on a daily, weekly, monthly basis. Start with the structure (floors and walls etc), then give details of each area, preparation surfaces, fixtures and equipment.

This should all be listed in the cleaning plan (refer to attached example) and put into practice. A regular check should be made of the premises and the effectiveness of the cleaning schedule. Update and alter as necessary.

For a cleaning plan to be effective it also needs to be “signed off” and a record kept so that it can be audited. Keep all completed schedules in a binder or folder for a least a year.

Method

To be effective, a Cleaning Schedule must be drawn up for all parts of the premises. This should list:

- Items, areas and equipment to be cleaned.
- Cleaning product, type and amount of chemical to use.
- Cleaning method.
- Frequency and persons responsible.
- Date completed.
- Sign off (on a daily, or at least weekly basis).

For further information or assistance contact your Environmental Health Officer, Marlborough District Council, PO Box 443, Blenheim 7240