

Available online **free of charge** our Food Safety Management System packs in English, Bengali, Somali, Chinese, Kurdish, Turkish. Go to [www.cardiff.gov.uk/foodsafety](http://www.cardiff.gov.uk/foodsafety) and follow the link on the left hand side for Food Safety Management. The pack is designed to help you develop your own documented food safety management (HACCP) system as required by law. We also deliver training courses using this food safety management pack which is designed for owners or managers of food businesses that handle and prepare open high risk foods in Cardiff. For more information please contact Mair Thomas on 029 2087 1120. Alternatively you can order a Safer Food Better Business Pack for either Caterers or Retailers by calling the Food Standards Agency order line on 0845 60 60 667 where you can also get a whole range of food hygiene, standards, nutrition and labeling advice in various different languages free of charge.



## Emerging Issues from Cardiff Council's Public Protection

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### Food Sampling

We participate in a sampling programme collecting food samples from randomly chosen outlets across the city. The aim of this national scheme (known as the shopping basket survey) is to identify the general levels of microbiological contamination in food products, as well as detecting specific food poisoning organisms such as Salmonella, Listeria and E Coli. Foods included in the current 'shopping basket' include fresh cream cakes, cooked sliced meats, various varieties of sandwiches, cooked prawns, fresh herbs, smoked fish and crab meat. The sampling officer normally visits as a 'mystery shopper', all samples are analysed at the National Public Health Service laboratories. If any results give cause for concern then additional samples will be collected and the food business will be notified, and investigations to identify the causes of contamination may follow. All types of businesses are included in the survey including retail shops, food manufacturers, restaurants, takeaways and even on-line suppliers. So if you operate a food business in Cardiff you may well get a visit from the sampling officer soon!

**Contact Us...**  
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### E.coli O157 & Avoiding Cross-contamination

The Public Inquiry Report into the South Wales outbreak of E.coli O157 in 2005 was published earlier this year. This was the largest ever outbreak of E.coli in Wales with 157 cases and tragically one death. E.coli O157 is a particularly nasty bacteria. It is highly infectious and can result in kidney damage, brain damage and death. It is found mainly in the intestines of cattle and sheep and so can find its way onto raw meat. In his Report Professor Pennington makes 24 recommendations. Several of these recommendations are aimed at food businesses like yours:

**You must** ensure that your systems and procedures are capable of preventing the contamination or cross-contamination of food with E.coli O157.

**You must** get to grips with food safety management based on the HACCP principles and ensure it is a core part of the way in which you run your business.

vacuum packers during visits when both raw meat and ready to eat foods are being vac packed. They will also expect to see separate slicers and where necessary weighing scales.

**Never** use the same chopping board for raw meat and ready-to-eat food. Preferably use colour coded boards and knives.

**Storage** - Store raw foods separate from ready-to-eat food and don't let raw meat drip onto other food – keep it in sealed containers at the bottom of your fridge or in a separate fridge.

**Handling** - Don't wash meat before cooking it. Washing doesn't get rid of harmful bacteria – only proper cooking will. You also run the risk of splashing bacteria onto worktops and utensils. **Always wash your hands** after handling raw foods and before handling ready to eat foods.

**HACCP** - You should have a documented food safety management system e.g. HACCP or SFBB already in place. Again during inspections your food safety management documentation must be available on the premises and will be audited by the Officer in order to ensure that it covers all the hazards present in your business, that critical control measures are in place and that the system is fully implemented with up to date records kept on the premises. Your HACCP should be regularly reviewed and updated. If you do not have a HACCP or are unsure about this requirement you should contact us for advice. See details about our Free HACCP packs on the back page of this newsletter.

#### So, what is cross – contamination?

This is when harmful bacteria spread from raw foods to ready to eat foods e.g. cooked meats, salads.

#### What can you do to prevent cross-contamination with E.coli O157?

**Use Separate Equipment** - Separate equipment must be used for raw and ready to eat foods. Environmental Health Officers from the Food Safety Team will be expecting to see separate equipment such as two

### Meat Managers Hygiene & HACCP Course for Butchers

Due to the recommendations in the Pennington Report we are pleased to offer free training to all **butchers** in Cardiff on HACCP. The above one day course is to be held at City Hall on Monday 21<sup>st</sup> September, Tuesday 22<sup>nd</sup> September and Monday 5<sup>th</sup> October. There is no charge for this training due to funding from the Food Standards Agency Wales. If you would like to book a place please contact us on 029 2087 1128. Please note only one person per business may attend and this person must already have food hygiene training to Level II i.e. Basic Food Hygiene Training and be involved in the day to day running and food safety of the business. We hope to offer similar courses free of charge to other food businesses in the future.



In our last newsletter we told you about the Food Standards Agency's decision to approve a UK wide **Scores on the Doors** scheme where information about the food hygiene standards found during an inspection can be made public. A steering group comprising stakeholder and Food Standards Agency representatives has been set up with a timetable of work to implement the national scheme. Therefore watch this space for more information about Scores on the doors. In the meantime you can work on improving food safety, the structure, cleanliness, staff training and food safety management in your business to attain a better score.

The food safety risks posed by rodents in a food premises are very serious, some of the organisms associated with rodents include Salmonella, Listeria, Campylobacter and

that if a spillage occurs, it is cleaned up immediately. Ensure that all foods are stored covered and kept off the floor to discourage rodents from eating them. It is also a good idea to stack food a few inches away from walls so that the gap may be inspected for signs of rodents and to discourage the shy pests from hiding behind the food.

#### Signs of Infestation

You should regularly check for signs of infestation, even if you employ a pest controller. It only takes a matter of days for an infestation to get out of hand, which can occur between your scheduled pest visits. Signs to look out for include:

- Rodent droppings on the floor, shelves and other surfaces.
- Gnawed food packaging and structure.
- Greasy smear marks along the bottom of walls.
- Rodents themselves either dead or alive!

If there are any signs of a rodent problem do not delay in getting treatment, they will not go away. Although you can treat yourself this is not usually effective. Use a reputable pest control contractor for advice and treatment. Consider a contract as it can help to prevent problems arising and make more economic sense, it may also provide a due diligence defence under food safety legislation. Cardiff Council Pest Control Section can provide a service to food premises on a single visit basis or quote for an annual contract. For further information contact Pest Control on 029 2087 2934.



E.coli O157. Rats also carry the bacteria that cause the illness Leptospirosis (Weils Disease).

Food premises affected by rats and mice can pose serious risks to food safety and in circumstances where rodents gain access to food preparation and store rooms leads to the closure of the affected premises.

**Exclusion** - The best way to deal with pests is to exclude them from your premises completely, which is possible in almost all cases. Even if you do not have a current pest problem, measures must be taken to ensure that pests cannot get into your premises.

**Good Housekeeping** - Mice and rats will eat food debris from the floor and food waste not in sealed bins. Even when baits have been placed, if food is available they will eat the food and leave the bait. One mouse only has to eat the equivalent of one pea per day to survive. Therefore it is particularly important to ensure that food debris does not build up under and behind equipment. It is these dark, hard to see places that rats and mice prefer, so keep them clean and check them regularly. 'Clean as you go' so



# Gwobr Glendid Bwyd Cymru Welsh Food Hygiene Award

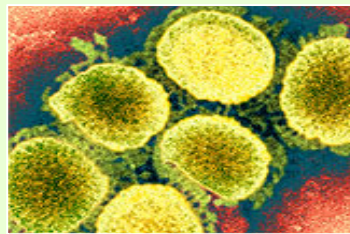
The Welsh Food Hygiene Award Scheme aims to give recognition to food businesses who have attained and maintained high standards of cleanliness, food hygiene practices, food safety management and staff training.

The scheme has three levels **Gold**, **Silver** and **Bronze**, which may be awarded on the discretion of the inspecting Officer, following an unannounced inspection of a food business that handles high risk food. The main criteria are for all open food handlers to have food hygiene training, the business to have a food safety management system in place, that there are no food safety hazards noted during the inspection and that there is confidence in the management of the business.

**Congratulations** to those of you who have attained a high standard and currently hold a Welsh Food Hygiene Award, the names and addresses of the successful businesses can be found on our website at [www.cardiff.gov.uk/foodhygieneaward](http://www.cardiff.gov.uk/foodhygieneaward). Only approximately 10% of businesses in Cardiff have attained a food hygiene award, therefore there is lots of room for improvement. For more information about Welsh Food Hygiene Awards you can contact us or go to our website [www.cardiff.gov.uk/foodhygieneaward](http://www.cardiff.gov.uk/foodhygieneaward). The general public have access to these lists of businesses with awards, and it is a good tool for promoting your business. If you are in the top 10% and hold a Welsh Food Hygiene Award you are eligible to apply for a Healthy Options award, for more information or to apply please contact Allyson Jones on 029 20 87 1842.

## Catch it, Bin it, Kill it!

**Swine Flu** is a respiratory illness that usually infects pigs, it is not transmitted in food. However a new strain called influenza A/H1N1v is able to infect humans and can be spread by inhalation of the virus, direct contact with infected people, and by touching contaminated surfaces. The symptoms of Swine flu are similar to those of seasonal influenza and commonly include; fever, coughing, sore throat, headaches, chills, muscle pains. Most reported cases in the UK have been mild and people have recovered fully after treatment.



and nose when sneezing or coughing, preferably using a tissue. Used tissues should be disposed of immediately and **hands washed** using liquid hand soap, hot and cold water.

Catering businesses can take the following action to minimise the spread of the virus amongst their staff and customers:

- Continue to **maintain good cleaning and disinfection practices** throughout your food preparation rooms and customer areas and **maintain high standards of personal hygiene** amongst staff.
- Staff reporting flu-like symptoms should be sent home and told to contact NHS Direct Wales on 0800 1 513 513 or visit [www.nhsdirect.wales.nhs.uk](http://www.nhsdirect.wales.nhs.uk).
- If diagnosed with Swine flu, staff should stay at home and remain away from work until fully recovered.
- People should be encouraged to **cover their mouth**

- You are **not** required to close your business if a member of staff or a customer is diagnosed with Swine Flu. Businesses may however decide to close where they have insufficient staff to provide a service.
- People suffering with other **serious** illnesses who come into contact with someone diagnosed with Swine flu should contact their GP for advice.
- Managers should encourage **frequent hand washing** with liquid soap and hot and cold water to reduce the spread of the virus.
- **Hand contact surfaces, such as door handles, taps, utensils and equipment should be cleaned and disinfected** to reduce the transmission of the virus.

More information can be found at: [www.hpa.org.uk](http://www.hpa.org.uk). Any further enquiries, please contact the Health Improvement Team: on 029 20 871161 or [communicabledisease@cardiff.gov.uk](mailto:communicabledisease@cardiff.gov.uk)

## Don't be left High and Dry...

We are regularly contacted by Welsh Water with details of food businesses that may have their water supply disconnected because they have failed to pay their utility bill.

Chapter VII of the Regulation (EC) No 852/2004 stipulates that food businesses must be provided with an adequate supply of potable water (fresh running water). The absence of a potable water supply within a food business is likely to constitute an imminent risk to public health due to an inability to undertake effective cleaning, regular hand washing, and the use of the WC facilities.

Where this authority becomes aware of a food business that does not have a potable water supply, an Officer will visit to formally close that food business until an adequate supply of potable water is available. Furthermore, legal proceedings may be instigated for non-compliance with food safety legislation.

## DIRTY SCOUNDRELS!

Unfortunately not all businesses attain and maintain good standards to achieve a Welsh Food Hygiene Award, some simply fail to comply with the requirements of food hygiene law. Therefore, despite their best efforts to educate and help businesses to secure compliance, Officers are often faced with serving legal notices and initiating prosecution proceedings against those who, despite Officers best efforts, flout the law...

Cardiff Council has successfully prosecuted two takeaway food businesses in City Road, Roath for failing to comply with Hygiene Improvement Notices requiring the production, and implementation, of a documented food safety management system. After pleading guilty to the offences at Cardiff Magistrates' Court on 22<sup>nd</sup> June 2009, they were fined £200 and £500 respectively, ordered to pay costs and a victim surcharge of £15.

On 20<sup>th</sup> July 2009, the Company Director of a Fish Bar in Splott, Cardiff pleaded guilty to failure to comply with a hygiene improvement notice requiring all food handlers that prepare open, high risk food, or handle food to have food hygiene training, and was fined £350 and ordered to pay £640.78 costs.

On 6<sup>th</sup> July 2009, the owners of a private members club in Cardiff pleaded guilty to two offences of failing to comply with food hygiene improvement notices and were fined £800 with £225 costs.

A City Road food business has been issued with a simple caution for failing to comply with 2 Hygiene Improvement Notices, and failing to provide an adequate supply of hot water for the washing of hands and equipment.

On 20<sup>th</sup> July 2009, the owner of a Restaurant in Canton pleaded guilty to 4 charges which included a lack of hot water to a hand wash basin, failure to put adequate procedures in place to control mice; failure to keep food premises clean, and failure to implement a Food safety Management system and was fined £2000 and ordered to pay costs of £1,584.86.

Some businesses across Cardiff have had to close in the last 6 months due to poor hygiene, pest infestations, not having hot water or any running water at all! Officers have dealt with a total of 6 voluntary closures and served 3 Hygiene Emergency Prohibition Notices and subsequently gone to court to secure closure of the food



Food hygiene training is the principle ingredient for any food business. Food safety knowledge is fundamental to the serving of high quality, safe food. Having all staff who handle open foods trained in food hygiene not only ensures legal compliance, but is also a key criteria in gaining a Welsh Food Hygiene Award. Our qualified Environmental Health Officers deliver the **Royal Society in Public Health Level 2 and 3 Food Safety** courses at competitive prices.

The **Level 2 Award in Food Safety in Catering course** is designed for all people who handle and prepare food, and covers the basic rules of food hygiene. There are currently spaces available on the following full day courses, with lunch included for £55 to be held at City Hall: -

**20<sup>th</sup> of October 09**  
**18<sup>th</sup> of November 09**

The **Level 3 Award in Supervising Food Safety in Catering** course is designed specifically for supervisors and managers of food handlers who are also responsible for the implementation of food safety management. The course is run over 3 full days at City Hall, for £180 with lunch and refreshments provided. There are spaces available on the next course being run on the following dates: -

**Session 1: 30<sup>th</sup> September; Session 2: 7<sup>th</sup> October; Session 3: 14<sup>th</sup> October 2009.**

More courses will be scheduled for 2010. Private courses are also available by arrangement, where we can deliver a course to a group of people at a venue of your choice.

For more information about any of our courses or to book a place contact Kathryn Bartlett or Emma Ridgill on 029 2087 1161.

businesses. The affected business have had to remain closed until Officers are satisfied that the risk to health has been eliminated, which can often take days or even weeks.

The costs of poor hygiene are not only those seen through the courts, but also on profits, reputation, staff morale and civil action taken by customers. It is better to invest a little time and effort into achieving a good standard of food hygiene, undertaking regular cleaning and implementing food safety procedures rather than stomaching the costs of poor food hygiene.