



## Food handler training is easy and free

Shoalhaven City Council has recently introduced its new "I'm Alert" on-line food handler training package. In association with Environmental Health Australia, Council is now encouraging all people within the city who handle food to update their skills and knowledge and best of all the training is free.

Food safety is your business. It is the responsibility of a food business to ensure that all food sold is safe and healthy and complies with the requirements of the Food Safety Standards.

This training package has been developed by qualified and experienced Environmental Health professionals and is equivalent in scope to a two-day consultant delivered course. Some of the topics covered include:

- Foodborne Illnesses
- Food Processing
- Potentially Hazardous Foods
- Contamination of Food
- Temperature Control
- Food Receipt
- Cleanliness of Premises
- Food Storage
- Animals and Pests

The interactive, logical and easy learning format will assist you and your staff to develop the skills and knowledge required to ensure safe food for your customers. Most sections include an interactive quiz, where upon the successful completion of the program, a training acknowledgement form can be printed and filed as part of your food safety records.

Council Environmental Health Officers will be handing out information regarding the training package during routine food premises inspections. Council also encourages those food handlers who participate in the training to notify Council, so that we can acknowledge the fact on the relevant food shop file for your business.

In addition to this new on-line food safety program, TAFE NSW conducts a short course in "Workplace Hygiene for Food Handlers". This nationally recognised course is designed to improve understanding in hygienic food handling practices. Persons interested in registering for this course should contact the following numbers.

- Nowra Campus 4421 9888
- Ulladulla Campus 4455 3866

## Be careful with eggs

If eggs are not handled correctly, Salmonella can grow, causing sickness. Most shell eggs in Australia are clean and free from bacteria but sometimes harmful bacteria can be found:

- Inside the egg, which is more likely if the shell is cracked. Some cracks are obvious but even hairline cracks where the shell membrane looks intact can be a problem;
- On the egg, which is more likely if the shell is dirty with yolk, albumen, soil, feathers and faecal or other matter stuck to the outside.

Food poisoning outbreaks linked to eggs have been traced back to foods that are uncooked or lightly cooked such as:

- Runny or under-cooked eggs
- Pikelets
- Custard

- Mousse
- Cheesecake
- Tiramisu

### Egg safety tips

#### Check eggs

When buying eggs, always:

- Buy eggs in cartons that show the name of the supplier and the 'best before' date
- Check the eggs are clean, free from visible dirt and feathers, and the shells have no visible cracks
- Make sure the eggs have not been stored in the sunlight
- Make sure you buy good quality, clean eggs



#### Store safely

When you put the eggs away, you should:

- Store them in the refrigerator in their own carton, or in a special container for eggs away from other food
- Check the temperature in your refrigerator is 5°C or below

#### Keep clean

When you prepare food:

- Wash hands before and after handling eggs
- Don't use cracked or dirty eggs
- Use fresh eggs (a fresh egg will sink in water, but a stale one won't)

#### Cook thoroughly

Cooking eggs thoroughly (so the yolk is not runny) kills any Salmonella that may be present.

## How do the food premises in the shoalhaven rate?

Within the Shoalhaven City Council Local Government Area there are a total of 871 food premises. They are presently classified in the following categories;

- 549 High Risk Premises (up to 4 inspections per year)
- 123 Medium Risk Premises (up to 2 inspections per year)
- 199 Low Risk Premises (up to 1 inspection per year)

Council's first six monthly report to the NSW Food Authority was submitted on the 13th of February 2009. This report was for the six month period from the 1st of July 2008 through to the 31st of December 2008. The status of those food premises inspected during this period is outlined below;

- Total number of Food Premises inspections: 448

- Percentage of Food Premises rated as Poor: 14%
- Percentage of Food Premises rated as Satisfactory: 59%
- Percentage of Food Premises rated as Good: 27%

Other key points to be identified during this period include;

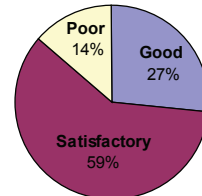
- Council sent out 72 warning letters to food premises in the Shoalhaven with 1 Improvement Notice being issued during this period.

- There were 22 food premises complaints. The majority of these complaints related to general food hygiene and handling concerns and incidents where foreign matter was found in food.

The pie charts depicted below provide a comparison between the first reporting period and the first 3 months of 2009.

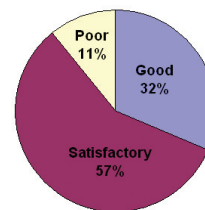
### Status of Food Premises in the Shoalhaven from 1/7/08 - 31/12/08

Total number of inspections - 448



### Status of Food Premises in the Shoalhaven from 1/1/09 - 31/3/09

Total number of inspections - 357



## Name and shame

For the past 12 months the NSW State Government through the NSW Food Authority has been publicly listing any NSW food businesses that have been issued with a fine on their Register of Penalty Notices. The State Government believe the register will assist consumers in deciding where to eat and buy food. The register not only shows the businesses name, but also the offence

and Local Council area they belong to. Offender's details will remain on the register for one year.

The register has received over 1.4 million hits since going live and has received widespread media coverage.

You should be aware that if you are issued with a Penalty Infringement Notice (fine) by Council, it is probable that the

fine will be published on the list for the general public to see. Council is likely to issue a fine where a serious breach of food legislation has been observed, or where the same breach has been observed on more than one occasion.

To view the register, go to the NSW Food Authority website:  
[www.foodauthority.nsw.gov.au](http://www.foodauthority.nsw.gov.au)

## Have you notified your business?

Have you just opened a new food business or taken ownership of an existing one? It is a requirement under the Food Act 2003 that you notify details of your food business to both Council and the NSW Food Authority prior to operation.

To notify your business to Council, simply obtain a "Food Registration Form" from Council or Council's website [www.shoalhaven.nsw.gov.au](http://www.shoalhaven.nsw.gov.au) complete and return.

To notify your business to the NSW Food Authority, log on to [www.foodnotify.nsw.gov.au](http://www.foodnotify.nsw.gov.au) and complete the notification online. Notification is free.

Council will soon be auditing its records to ensure all food businesses within the City have notified. Those businesses that have failed to notify their business to the NSW Food Authority may be given a Penalty Infringement Notice (fine) of \$330 fine in the case of an individual

or \$660 in the case of a corporation. To ensure that your business is not issued with a fine, notify your food business online immediately.

Should you require assistance in notifying your food business or have any enquiries, please contact Council's Environmental Health Officers on (02) 4429 3111 during business hours.

If you have any comments, suggested items or would like to receive future editions of 'Food News' via email please contact the Environmental Services section by emailing [council@shoalhaven.nsw.gov.au](mailto:council@shoalhaven.nsw.gov.au) or visit our website [www.shoalhaven.nsw.gov.au](http://www.shoalhaven.nsw.gov.au)

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