



HUME CITY COUNCIL

Hume Food News

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hume.vic.gov.au/foodnews



Exhaust canopies and fire safety

Over the last month, there has been several fires in food premises which have started in or spread to the exhaust canopies from cooking equipment.

Exhaust canopies over cooking equipment have a grease build-up, which holds food and other particles to the surface. This leads to the filters becoming clogged and a coating of grease and fat building up on the inside and outside surfaces of the canopy.

It is very important to ensure that the exhaust canopy above cooking equipment in any food premises is routinely cleaned, as well as surfaces between the cooking equipment and exhaust canopy.

The cleaning schedule should include the whole exhaust system including:

- the internal and external surface of the canopy
- the exhaust filters
- the condensation gutter
- any light fittings
- the ductwork.

While some of the above can be cleaned by the business, some of the more difficult areas to access (such as the ductwork) should be cleaned by specialist trades people.

The type and quantity of cooking will affect how often you need to clean your ductwork. Annually should be sufficient for most businesses. However, some premises (such as charcoal chicken shops) will require more regular cleaning, possibly as often as every six months.

It's not just about being clean, it's also about the safety of you, your staff, and your business

The build-up of oil within the filters and ducts presents a significant fire hazard. If it is obvious that you rarely, if ever, clean the canopy your insurance company may view it as contributory negligence and curtail or limit its payout.



Single-use plastic ban in Victoria



Draft Regulations to ban single-use plastic items in Victoria | Engage Victoria

To help stop plastic pollution, the Victorian Government is banning single-use plastic straws, cutlery, plates, drink-stirrers, expanded polystyrene food and drink containers and cotton bud sticks from 1 February 2023.

The ban will apply to items that are made from conventional plastic, as well as degradable and compostable plastics – such as bioplastics. This recognises that if they are littered, compostable plastics can still harm wildlife in the same way as conventional plastics do and require specialised processing to break down.

Single-use plastics

- make up a third of the litter we see on our streets and in our waterways – they are difficult and costly to clean up
- are often used for only a few minutes but remain in the environment for a long time
- pollute the environment – harming wildlife and contaminating our food and water.

Get ready for the ban now

We encourage your business or organisation to start preparing now, ahead of the commencement on 1 February 2023. You can:

- run down stocks of banned items, and avoid ordering any more
- start considering alternative reusable items or single-use items made from materials such as bamboo, wood or paper
- sign up for updates by clicking 'follow' at engage.vic.gov.au/SUP-ban-regulations

For more information on the single-use plastics ban, head to: www.vic.gov.au/single-use-plastics

Allergen labelling

Some foods and ingredients can cause allergic reactions including anaphylaxis, immune reactions such as Coeliac disease, and other adverse health reactions such as asthma. In February 2021, new plain English allergen labelling requirements were introduced for how certain foods known to be common allergens are declared. These changes will mean food allergen information is clearer and easier to find on food labels.

Food businesses have three years to update their labels to meet the new requirements. You can expect to see changes fully introduced by February 2024.

What must be declared

The food and ingredients listed below will need to be declared in the ingredient list when they are present using the exact name (from Table 1 below) and bolded text: for example, cheese (milk) or milk powder. As indicated in the table, the new requirements also mean that individual tree nuts, molluscs and individual cereals must all be declared separately.

Table 1: Foods and ingredients to be declared (using these names)

Wheat	Soy, Soya, Soybean	Pistachio
Fish	Seasame	Pine nut
Crustacean	Almond	Walnut
Mollusc	Brazil nut	Barley*
Egg	Cashew	Oats*
Milk	Hazelnut	Rye*
Lupin	Macadamia	Sulphites**
Peanut	Pecan	

* Barley, oats, and rye must be declared if they contain gluten.

** Sulphites must be declared when added in amounts equal to or more than 10 milligrams per kilogram of food.

A bolded, separate allergen summary statement starting with the word 'contains' will also need to be provided near the ingredient list to help quickly identify any allergens present. For example, 'Contains milk'.

If a cereal containing gluten such as wheat, barley, oats and rye, (including hybrids of these cereals such as triticale) is present, the label will need to identify this in the summary statement using the word 'gluten'.

If the food is not in packaging or does not need to have a label, the information must be displayed with the food or can be requested from the supplier. For example, by asking about allergens in food prepared and sold from a takeaway shop.

Product exemptions

Some food can be manufactured in a way that makes it safe to be eaten by people with allergies and does not need to have allergens declared.

To find out more, go to www.foodstandards.gov.au and search 'allergen labelling'

Bee products

If a food contains bee pollen, propolis or royal jelly they must be labelled with either a warning or advisory statement. To find out more, visit www.foodstandards.gov.au and search 'warning and advisory statements'

'May Contain' statement

Some food labels use 'may contain' or 'may be present' statements to indicate the possible unintended presence of allergens occurring during food manufacture, such as 'may contain milk'. This is also known as precautionary allergen labelling (PAL). These are voluntary statements made by food suppliers and the Food Standards Code does not regulate them.

More information

Search 'Food Allergen Portal' at www.foodstandards.gov.au



Chocolate outbreak highlights importance of food safety

Prior to Easter, Ferrero Australia conducted a recall of several Kinder chocolate products. So far, there have been over 150 cases across a dozen European countries. Most cases so far have been children under 10, with many of the infected having to be hospitalised.

Salmonella Typhimurium has been traced to bad buttermilk at the Ferrero Factory in Arlon, Belgium. The outbreak likely began in mid-December 2021, with cases appearing over the following months.

Although this current outbreak was linked to buttermilk, cacao beans can become contaminated. Typically, the roasting process kills the salmonella, but it can remain on the raw beans. So, segregating raw and roasted beans is crucial.

Manufacturers must stay on top of the latest industry regulations to ensure that food safety is being taken care of. These checks and procedures not only contribute to improving production levels, but they also protect customers from harmful bacteria. This is a reminder that food safety is vital when handling any food and that correct food handling always needs to occur.

Australia's Food Safety report card

Coinciding with this year's World Food Safety Day, the Food Safety Information Council (FSIC) released a report card on Australia's food safety record.

The report highlights the need to ensure we are all following basic food safety procedures, such as correct handwashing, food handling processes and refrigeration temperatures. This is so we can all help reduce the estimated 4.1 million cases of food poisoning in Australia each year that result in 31,920 hospitalisations, 86 deaths and 1 million visits to doctors.

The positives were:

- Less diagnosed salmonella
- Less washing of raw chicken



The negatives were:

- Decrease in handwashing
- Use of wild mushrooms
- Unregulated sale of food on social media



For the entire report, visit www.foodsafety.asn.au



Bacillus cereus

What is it?

- *Bacillus cereus* (*B. cereus*) is a type of bacteria widespread in the environment.
- It can form spores and toxins that are not destroyed by cooking or boiling.
- Foods at higher risk of contamination include pre-cooked starchy foods like rice, pasta and cereals, and pre-cooked mixed dishes, especially spiced dishes.

What's the risk?

- *B. cereus* can cause vomiting and diarrhoea.
- Anyone can get sick with *B. cereus* but vulnerable people (i.e. young children, pregnant women, the elderly) and people with weak immune systems (like cancer patients) can become seriously ill.

Reduce your risk

- Cook food thoroughly and serve it immediately or keep it hot (60°C or hotter) before serving.
- Cool cooked food quickly if it is going to be used later:
 - put it in the fridge (or freezer) as soon as it stops steaming.
 - divide large amounts of hot food into smaller containers to let it cool faster.
 - make sure your fridge is 5°C or colder.
- Keep leftovers in the fridge (or freezer) and dispose of refrigerated leftovers if not eaten within 3-4 days (or within 1 day for vulnerable people).
- Wash your hands with soap and dry them before preparing and eating food.
- Keep your kitchen and equipment clean.

Symptoms of illness from *B. cereus*

- Symptoms usually start 1 to 16 hours after eating contaminated food. Common symptoms are nausea, vomiting, abdominal cramps, and watery diarrhoea.
- Most people only have mild symptoms and recover quickly (within a day or less).

Hume City Council recognises the rich Aboriginal heritage within the municipality and acknowledges the Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung, which includes the Gunung-Willam-Balluk clan, as the Traditional Custodians of this land. Council embraces Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander living cultures as a vital part of Australia's identity and recognises, celebrates and pays respect to the existing family members of the Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung and to Elders past, present and future.

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