



## CHANGES TO HOW FOOD SAFETY IS ENFORCED

As you may be aware, some major changes to the Food Act 1984 have been rolled out over the past 12 months. Councils now have additional enforcement options:

### Food Premises Closures

Councils now have the authority to include in an Order served on a food premises:

- a requirement that the premises not be used for the sale or handling of food (effectively closing the premises), or
- that a certain process is not to be carried out at the premises

until an Environmental Health Officer (EHO) is satisfied that the requirements of the Order have been complied with. There are penalties of up to \$14,400 if people disobey the requirements of an Order.

Yarra Council expects to use this enforcement option on rare occasions when an EHO—after inspecting a food premises—determines there is an immediate risk to health and the premises needs to be closed (or a process restricted) to protect public health.

Previously, closure orders could only be issued by the State Government's Department of Health. These changes allow Council to act quickly when a food premises poses a serious risk to public health.

### New fines

From 1 March 2011, Councils have the option of issuing penalty fines for a number of offences under the Food Act 1984 and the Food Safety Standards including offences regarding:

- unsafe storing, processing, displaying, and transporting of food
- poor cleanliness

- poor structure of food premises
- poor cleaning and sanitising of food equipment
- operating food premises without registration or notification, and
- failure to keep the Food Safety Program or required minimum records on site.

A complete list of offences for which fines may be issued can be found at [www.health.vic.gov.au/foodsafety/guide/tools](http://www.health.vic.gov.au/foodsafety/guide/tools).

Depending on the offence, fines vary from \$240–\$600 (per offence) for an individual, and \$350–\$1195 (per offence) for a body corporate.

Fines may be issued in cases of serious or continual non-compliance, where Council considers it to be a more appropriate enforcement action than prosecution in the Magistrates' Court.

### Welcome

Welcome to *Food News* - a quarterly bulletin produced by Yarra City Council to keep businesses informed about current food safety news and health requirements.

Information on food safety is also provided on our website at [www.yarracity.vic.gov.au](http://www.yarracity.vic.gov.au).

Would you like to receive a copy of Food News and other business information electronically? If so, please email your details to: [info@yarracity.vic.gov.au](mailto:info@yarracity.vic.gov.au)

### Contact Details

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Yarra City Council  
Richmond Town Hall  
333 Bridge Road Richmond 3121

**Tel:** 9205 5166 **Fax:** 8417 6666

**Website:** [www.yarracity.vic.gov.au](http://www.yarracity.vic.gov.au)

## MEAT SLICER CLEANLINESS

Recent sampling results of sliced ham in a Yarra food premises showed a high bacterial count in the product. An investigation revealed that other products including cheese were sliced on the same machine. It was noted the slicer was cleaned thoroughly at the end of each day.

As food is left on a machine following slicing, it is recommended that:

- separate slicers be used for meat and cheese (this will help prevent cross

contamination and protect customers with allergies), and

- slicers are thoroughly cleaned and sanitised at least every four hours. The 2/4 hour food safety rule (where food is safe after two hours but should be discarded after four hours) applies due to the food residues on the contact surfaces.

> see also *Believe it or Not overleaf*

## EFFECTIVE HAND WASHING

Effective hand washing in a food premises is one of the most important steps in reducing food contamination. Food handlers need to wash their hands using soap and warm water, and to dry their hands on paper towel.

Many food businesses often forget to replace paper towels and soap when they run out. Food businesses need to check at least once per day that paper towels and soap are in the basin area.

The following extract from the Food Safety Standards is provided to clarify requirements regarding hand basins in food premises.

All food premises are required to have hand basins in the following locations:

- within areas where food handlers work if their hands are likely to be a source of contamination of food, and
- if there are toilets on the food premises, immediately adjacent to the toilets or toilet cubicles.

The hand washing facilities must be:

- permanent fixtures
- connected to, or otherwise provided with, a supply of warm running potable water
- of a size that allows easy and effective hand washing, and
- clearly designated for the sole purpose of washing hands, arms and face.



The Standards also require that a food business must, for each food premises:

- maintain easily accessible hand washing facilities
- maintain at or near each hand washing facility, a supply of:
  - > warm running water, and
  - > soap, or
  - > other items that may be used to thoroughly clean hands
- ensure hand washing facilities are only used for the washing of hands, arms and face and
- provide at or near each hand washing facility:
  - > single use towels or other means of effectively drying hands that are not likely to transfer pathogenic micro-organisms to the hands, and
  - > a container for used towels if needed.

## BELIEVE IT OR NOT

A Yarra Council Environmental Health Officer witnessed the following during a recent inspection in a café:

A food handler was preparing a meal. He took the meat (prosciutto ham) out of the cool room and went to the meat slicer which was located at the rear of the food premises. The meat slicer was located on a bench in an area not suitable for food preparation. The ceiling above the bench was damaged and missing. Before the food handler placed the chub of meat on

the slicer, he gave the slicer a flick with a tea towel that had been tucked into his pants. He then proceeded to slice the meat directly onto his hands. This meat was then placed on the plate ready for the customer to eat.

These very poor food handling practices may lead to food being contaminated. The food handler was told by the EHO to dispose of the meat and that he was required to improve his food handling immediately, including relocating the slicer.

IF YOU WOULD LIKE TO KNOW MORE ABOUT THE INFORMATION IN THIS DOCUMENT AND YOUR LANGUAGE IS NOT LISTED BELOW, YOU CAN CONTACT AN INTERPRETER ON **9280 1940**

### VIETNAMESE

NẾU MUỐN BIẾT THÊM CHI TIẾT VỀ NỘI DUNG VĂN KIỆN NÀY, QUÍ VỊ CÓ THỂ LIÊN LẠC VỚI MỘT THÔNG DỊCH VIÊN QUA ĐIỆN THOẠI SỐ **9280 1939**

### GREEK

ΑΝ ΘΕΛΕΤΕ ΠΕΡΙΣΣΟΤΕΡΕΣ ΠΛΗΡΟΦΟΡΙΕΣ ΣΕ ΣΧΕΣΗ ΜΕ ΤΑ ΣΤΟΙΧΕΙΑ ΠΟΥ ΠΕΡΙΕΧΟΝΤΑΙ ΣΤΟ ΕΝΤΥΠΟ ΑΥΤΟ, ΜΠΟΡΕΙΤΕ ΝΑ ΕΠΙΚΟΙΝΩΗΣΕΤΕ ΜΕ ΕΝΑ ΔΙΕΡΜΗΝΕΑ ΣΤΟΝ ΑΡΙΘΜΟ **9280 1934**

### MANDARIN

如果想要进一步了解这份文件中的内容，您可以致电 **9280 1937**，和翻译员取得联系

### CANTONESE

如果您要更多地瞭解關於這篇文件的內容，您可以與傳譯員聯絡，電話號碼**9280 1932**

### ITALIAN

SE DESIDERATE SAPERNE DI PIÙ CIRCA LE INFORMAZIONI CONTENUTE IN QUESTO DOCUMENTO, POTETE CONTATTARE UN INTERPRETE AL **9280 1931**

### TURKISH

BU BELGEDE YERELAN BİLGİLERE İLİŞKİN DAHA FAZLA BİLGİ EDİNMEK İSTİYORSANIZ, **9280 1938** NUMARADAN BİR TERCÜMANLA GÖRÜŞEBİLİRSİNİZ

### ARABIC

لمعرفة المزيد عن المعلومات الواردة في هذه الوثيقة بإمكانكم الاتصال بمترجم على الرقم **9280 1930**

### SPANISH

SI QUIERE MÁS DETALLES SOBRE LA INFORMACIÓN CONTENIDA EN ESTE DOCUMENTO, PÓNGASE EN CONTACTO CON UN INTÉRPRETE LLAMANDO AL TELÉFONO Nº **9280 1935**

### MACEDONIAN

АКО САКАТЕ ДА ДОЗНАЕТЕ ПОВЕЌЕ ЗА ИНФОРМАЦИЈИТЕ ВО ОВОЈ ДОКУМЕНТ ЈАВЕТЕ СЕ ЗА ПРЕВЕДУВАЧ НА **9280 1936**



Yarra City Council invites you to enter your business into the Yarra Sustainability Awards 2011.

The Sustainable Business Category aims to recognise and reward businesses that have shown leadership in reducing their environmental impact and have made a positive contribution to environmental sustainability in Yarra.

Entries close Thursday 31 March 2011.

For information and an online entry form visit: [www.yarracity.vic.gov.au/Environment/Sustainability-Awards/](http://www.yarracity.vic.gov.au/Environment/Sustainability-Awards/) or contact Rachel Oliphant, Community Sustainability Officer, on **9205 5769**.