

# Food & Safety

## BULLETIN

Winter 2017

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Keep up to date with the latest news and advice from the Food Safety, Licensing and Trading Standards teams of Torbay Council - @TorbayFSL

### Other ways to contact us:

Tel: 01803 208025  
[www.torbay.gov.uk/foodsafety](http://www.torbay.gov.uk/foodsafety)



## Welcome

to the 13th edition of our Food & Safety Bulletin, included are articles of interest on food safety that are likely to be relevant to your business.

If you would like any help or advice on any of the articles in this edition please contact a member of the Team on the details below.

Wishing you a successful festive season.

Helen Perkins - Principal Environmental Health Officer, Community Safety

## Food Safety Update Day

The Food team were pleased to see so many businesses at our Food Safety Update Seminar in October. The seminar was designed for specific businesses that would normally be inspected every 2 years (D risk premises), that have a food hygiene rating of 3 or above and were currently due for an inspection. Over 90 businesses attended the seminar which covered topics of Food Hygiene Rating Scheme tips for top scores, Safer Food Better Business pack update, stock rotation, traceability, temperature control, cleaning update, current food trends, allergy awareness, health and safety and trading standards advice. It was great to have the support from the Devon, Somerset and Torbay Trading Standards Service on the day and the feedback from the event was very positive. Businesses that were invited but did not attend will continue to receive their unannounced inspection in the near future.



# Be prepared when making pate or parfait to prevent poisoning



Campylobacter is the most common cause of food poisoning in the UK and is considered to be responsible for more than 280,000 cases each year. Campylobacter causes more than 100 deaths a year, and costs the UK economy about £900 million. About four in five cases of campylobacter poisoning in the UK come from contaminated poultry. Although it does not normally grow in food, it spreads easily and has a low infective dose so only a few bacteria in a piece of undercooked chicken, or bacteria transferred from raw chicken onto other ready-to-eat foods, can cause illness.

Chicken liver pate or parfait dishes have increased in popularity over the last few years and many chefs recommend leaving the center of the livers pink which does not kill the bacteria. Campylobacter can be present throughout the liver, not just on the surface which is why they must be cooked thoroughly. All offal should be cooked until it is no longer bloody, steaming hot all the way through and has reached a core temperature of 70°C for two minutes or equivalent e.g. 75°C for 30 seconds.

More than 90% of outbreaks of Campylobacter at catering venues in 2011 were linked to the consumption of chicken liver pâté or parfait. Investigations into the outbreaks revealed that the livers used to make the parfait or pâté was undercooked allowing the liver to remain pink in the center.

Campylobacter is not just found in chicken but red meat too and so any livers used to make dishes such as pâté or parfait should be treated in the same way as raw chicken i.e. handled hygienically and cooked thoroughly.

Whether you make or buy in pâté or parfait at your premises then you should consider the following:

- Method of production – it is safer to thoroughly cook the livers before blending with other ingredients
- Cross contamination – you must NOT blend raw livers with the same equipment you use for ready-to-eat products e.g. salad dressing & mousse. This is because the blender is a complex piece of equipment as defined in the Food Standards Agency's E.coli Guidance first issued in February 2011\*
- Handling practices – regular hand washing should be undertaken and avoid frequent wrapping, unwrapping and handling during service
- Stock rotation – best practice for determining shelf life is the day of opening or production plus 2 days i.e. 3 days maximum
- Temperature control – ensure correct temperatures are achieved during both cooking and storage
- Documentation – if you make pâté or parfait then you must document the controls you have in place to reduce the risks. If you have a Safer Food Better Business pack, create an additional page and write down your recipe and method, the risks posed during handling, preparation, cooking, cooling and storage and how you will minimise those risks.

\*E. coli O157: Control of cross-contamination. Guidance for food business operators and enforcement authorities

[E coli Guide.pdf](#)

\*E.coli O157: An invisible threat to your business Factsheet on steps to control the risk of contamination

[E coli Cross Contamination Factsheet.pdf](#)

## So-ya allergies up to date?

- Check your vegetable cooking oil for allergens

When compiling customer allergy information don't forget the cooking oil that the food is cooked in.

One of the most common vegetable oils in use is Soya Bean oil and so must be declared as containing the allergen if foods are cooked in it.

Soya oil may also be found in some margarines and spreads as well as in oil. In addition, soya is an ingredient in many processed foods, usually as soya lecithin or soya concentrate or isolated soya protein where it is used as an emulsifier or stabiliser.





# Norovirus

Norovirus, which causes diarrhoea and vomiting, is one of the most common stomach bugs in the UK. You can catch it at any time of the year. Often confused with food poisoning symptoms it is actually a virus that spreads easily in public places such as hotels, hospitals, residential care homes and on board coaches or trains.

A person with norovirus is most infectious from when their symptoms start until 48 hours after all their symptoms have passed, although they may also be infectious for a short time before and after this. If you run a hotel or are an accommodation provider then you need to ensure you have a plan of action if you suspect you have a norovirus outbreak in your business. We have produced a guidance document that will assist in controlling any potential viral outbreak that may occur: [Food Safety Advice](#)

The most important thing is not to assume that an outbreak of vomiting and diarrhoea is always norovirus. If you have two or more cases with symptoms of sickness and/or diarrhoea you must contact Environmental Health Food Safety team 01803 208025. If you cannot get hold of the team, for example if it's a bank holiday, then you must contact Public Health England (PHE) who operate an Out of Hours service 0300 303 8162 (option 1, then option 1). Both the Food Safety team and PHE can support you by offering practical advice and guidance. We can arrange for faecal samples to be collected to test whether it is viral or food poisoning bacteria. This information can be extremely useful when communicating with customers after such an event. If you would like some faecal sample pots in advance please contact us on 01803 208025 to discuss this.



## Are you selling food online?

If so you fall under the food legislation that covers any other food business and there are some specific things you need to consider:

- You need to ensure that you are registered as a food business with Torbay Council. This is free and can be done online at [www.torbay.gov.uk/foodsafety](http://www.torbay.gov.uk/foodsafety)
- You need to ensure that the food you sell is safe.
- You need to ensure that you have a good system of traceability in place which means that you need to know and keep records of where your ingredients and food products have been purchased from and where your products are being supplied to.
- Ensure any unsafe food is withdrawn from sale or recalled from customers.
- Consideration should be given to temperature control if it is a frozen or refrigerated product.
- Ensure that your labelling, advertising and marketing of your product does not mislead the consumer. If you need any advice on this Trading Standards can be contacted on [tsadvice@devon.gov.uk](mailto:tsadvice@devon.gov.uk)

The Food Standards Agency have produced some guidance for businesses on selling food online and this can be found at:

[Advice for Businesses Selling Food Online.pdf](#)



## Food safety management in your business

As a food business operator you are aware that looking after food safety and hygiene in your business is the key to preventing food poisoning and ensuring that the food you prepare and serve is safe to eat. Identifying what might go wrong, such as cooked foods becoming contaminated with bacteria, and putting in place safety procedures to prevent them from happening is known as a food safety management system. There has been a legal requirement to have one documented or written down since 2006. For the past 11 years you will have been asked to show your documented food safety management system during a visit by an officer. The Food Standards Agency's Safer Food Better Business (SFBB) documentation is the system used most widely amongst businesses in Torbay. Just a reminder that you can download a copy of the SFBB from [www.food.gov.uk/sfbb](http://www.food.gov.uk/sfbb). Alternatively, you can also buy a copy of the pack (including a year's diary) from Torbay Council at a cost of £15. The pack is printed in colour and on wipeable paper. The option of a year's diary refill is also available at a cost of £5. Both can be purchased on 01803 208025. It is important to note that failure to have an up to date, working documented food safety management system is likely to affect your businesses food hygiene rating. Please note that this type of documentation is not suitable if you are doing complex processes such as sous vide.

## ‘Ask for Angela’ campaign

Torquay’s Best Bar None group, in partnership with Safer Communities Torbay, is helping to protect any person who may feel frightened during a date or by their partner whilst out in several of its harbour-side licensed premises, by launching a new scheme called ‘Ask for Angela’.

The scheme which was originally set up in Lincolnshire is being led and rolled out in a number of Torquay’s pubs by the local Best Bar None group.

It works by licensed premises displaying an ‘Ask for Angela’ poster or window sticker which signals that the pub, club, restaurant or bar is signed up to the scheme. In those premises staff know to take action if someone approaches the bar and asks if they can speak with ‘Angela’. If that happens the staff will discreetly offer to separate the individual asking for Angela from the person who is causing them discomfort or distress, and ensure that the person is able to leave safely. In any situation where a person becomes aggressive or is making threats to harm an individual or a member of staff, the police will be called immediately.

Obviously an initiative such as this will only be effective if all staff are fully aware of the campaign and have the confidence to act and support the customer if they are approached for help. Poster resources are available on request. Further information on the Ask for Angela campaign and other supportive services for individuals concerned about abuse from intimate partners and family members is available at:

[www.areyouok.co.uk](http://www.areyouok.co.uk)

Best Bar None is a nationally accredited scheme that aims to recognise outstanding standards in licensed premises and efforts to reduce crime and improve community safety in an area. The scheme is supported by Devon, Cornwall and the Isles of Scilly’s Police and Crime Commissioner Alison Hernandez along with other key partners.



## Café Pavement Licence

If you are considering having tables and chairs on the highway outside your business you may need to apply for a café pavement licence.

Fees for applications are calculated by the size of the area. For more details, including design and layout, and the application form visit:

[www.torbay.gov.uk/pavement-licence/](http://www.torbay.gov.uk/pavement-licence/)

Businesses are strongly encouraged to contact the Council’s Licensing Team for guidance in advance of making an application.

Address: Torbay Council, Torquay Town Hall, Castle Circus, Torquay, TQ1 3DR

Tel: 01803 208025

# Hygienic Ice Handling

Certain bacteria and viruses can survive freezing for many hours and can also remain capable of growth in very strong alcoholic drinks. It is therefore important that ice does not become contaminated by airborne particles, food handlers or dirty utensils. The most likely sources of contamination of ice are inadequate cleaning of the ice making machine or equipment and poor hygiene practices when handling the ice.

## Water Supply

The ice machine should be connected to a “direct” mains water supply i.e. not via a storage tank. The water used must meet drinking water standards.

## Machine Location

- The machine should be sited in an area that is free from dirt and dust, preferably off the ground away from any sources of heat.
- There should be sufficient space and ventilation around the machine to allow for efficient air movement.

## Machine Cleaning

- The ice storage compartment should be cleaned regularly, at least fortnightly, to prevent the build up of bacteria. It should be monitored for any growth of scum or slime and if such growths become apparent, it should be immediately cleaned according to the manufacturer’s instructions. The ice should be removed and the ice storage compartment cleaned and disinfected using appropriate food grade products. If appropriate this should be followed by a thorough rinse.
- The ice that has been removed from the machine to allow for cleaning should be disposed of and should not be returned to the ice machine.
- The exterior of the machine particularly the door/hatch of the ice storage compartment must be kept clean.

## Hygienic Handling, Storage and Service of Ice

- The person dispensing ice from the machine should wash and dry their hands thoroughly before starting the task.
- The ice should always be removed from the machine using a clean utensil such as a scoop (hands should never be used).
- A glass tumbler is not suitable because of the risk of glass fragments being lost inside the

machine in the event of the glass being chipped or broken whilst removing ice from the storage compartment.

- Both the scoop and the container it is stored in should be kept in a clean place. **The scoop should not be left in the machine but stored in a container of sanitizer solution which should be regularly changed.**
- The door/hatch of the ice making machine should be kept closed unless ice is being dispensed from the machine.
- The ice compartment of the ice machine should not be used for the storage of bottles of beer, cans of soft drinks, cartons of milk or any other items.
- If ice is stored in buckets lids should always be used. Ice buckets should always be kept behind the bar where staff alone can serve ice to avoid customers handling ice with bare hands. Any ice remaining in the ice buckets at closing time should be disposed of and should not be returned to the ice machine.
- Ice buckets, containers and serving utensils must be regularly cleaned and disinfected. It is recommended that either the dish washer or glass washer is used for this purpose. Optic cleaner is not a disinfectant and should only be used for optics.
- Any ice remaining at the end of service should be disposed of and not returned to the ice machine.

## Health and Safety

Before proceeding with any cleaning operation ensure that the electrical power supply to the machine is switched off and that the water line is closed.



# Why can you have a safe rare steak and not a rare burger?

Bacteria, for example E. coli, tend to be found on the outside surfaces of whole cuts of meat such as steaks and joints, rather than inside the meat. If you mince meat, for example to make burgers, the meat is thoroughly mixed and this means that any E. coli from the outside will be mixed all the way through the burger. In summary, if you sear just the outside of a minced meat burger, the inner surfaces could still be contaminated and harmful bacteria could survive.

[Ecoli Cross Contamination Factsheet.pdf](#)

The longstanding Food Standards Agency (FSA) advice is that the safest approach to cooking burgers is to ensure that they are cooked thoroughly all the way through e.g. 75°C for 30 seconds core temperature. However, in 2015, the FSA Board agreed a new position, whereby caterers can serve burgers which are, 'less than thoroughly cooked' provided they have robust, validated HACCP-based procedures in place throughout the supply chain and the caterers cook burgers to a time/temperature capable of achieving at least a 4-log<sub>10</sub> reduction in pathogens. They must also give a message to customers at the point of ordering making them aware that they would be eating a more risky food. In practical terms a 4-log<sub>10</sub> reduction means if there were 100,000 bacteria to begin with, you would end up with 10 bacteria at the end of cooking.

## Less Than Thoroughly Cooked Beef Burgers

There is also a requirement to notify your local food EHO prior to serving burgers that are less than thoroughly cooked. This will allow the EHO to assess the business' proposed HACCP-based procedures. A validated and verified food safety management plan is essential before you commence to serve them. Safer Food Better Business is not adequate to cover the serving of less than thoroughly cooked burgers. Just putting up a warning note on the menu or a sign is not sufficient.

Local authorities have been advised that if there is poor understanding of the potential hazards at the food business or there are no appropriate, validated food safety management procedures in place, then enforcement action should be considered. It would also affect your Food Hygiene Rating if the EHO feels they have little confidence in management at the premises. It may also mean that the frequency of inspection of your premises is increased because of the additional risk.



## Hoping to improve your food hygiene rating? Don't delay.

Have you been given a food hygiene rating of 4 or below, made improvements and would like to try and get a higher rating. You can request a re inspection of your business free of charge at the moment by filling out a Rescoring Request form. This can be downloaded from our website at

[www.torbay.gov.uk/fhrs/](http://www.torbay.gov.uk/fhrs/)

Requests for re inspections are currently free of charge however from April 1st 2018 you will be charged if you are requesting an inspection. So be quick and put your requests in now to avoid being charged.

# Focus on seafood

The Team are often asked to take part in national sampling surveys to help establish emerging food issues or to provide a better picture of the safety of certain food types or foods prepared in certain ways. We recently took part in a SW study on ready to eat cooked sea food. This included mussels, cockles, whelks and crabmeat. 148 samples were taken and tested at Porton Down laboratory. The samples were taken from places such as supermarkets, fishmongers, shellfish vans and kiosks. They were tested for a range of bacteria including listeria and salmonella. 40% of the results were either borderline or unsatisfactory. It is likely that poor storage and handling practices at the retail stage are common contributory factors to some of the unsatisfactory results. However, it was also noted that the worst results were associated with molluscs, crabmeats

and prawns. The processing of these products is mainly by hand, meaning there is greater potential for post-cooking contamination of the product during the meat picking and packing stages. An additional post-packing pasteurisation step is often used to reduce this risk.

This study helps us to understand the higher level of controls needed to ensure sea food is microbiologically safe. If no further heating process such as pasteurisation is applied after processing and packing, then hygienic handling, production and storage conditions play an even more important role in the quality of the final product, as does subsequent handling and storage during its retail life.



## Free Training - Child Sexual Exploitation

Safer Communities Torbay would like to remind you about the offer of FREE TRAINING on Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE) that was made in their newsletter in July. This is an important issue that can affect anyone and we would like to encourage as many local businesses as possible to sign up for this awareness raising session. Several of the larger hotels have already expressed an interest in their staff receiving the training which is being delivered by Checkpoint and will be held in the New Year. To find out more or to register your interest in attending, please contact Ann Penwell by email [Ann.Penwell@childrenssociety.org.uk](mailto:Ann.Penwell@childrenssociety.org.uk)

# Food Hygiene Training Courses

'Level 2 Food Hygiene in Catering' is a regulated course that is now delivered by Environmental Health Officers at Torbay Council. There is a monthly programme planned and bookings can be made via the council's website [www.torbay.gov.uk/food-safety-training/](http://www.torbay.gov.uk/food-safety-training/)

This level of training and knowledge is the minimum which would be expected by food handlers working in catering. It covers all the basics such as bacteria, safe storing, cooking, cooling and how to avoid food poisoning. The cost is £50 per person which includes training, exam papers and workbooks.

We have also delivered a number of bespoke training sessions booked across the bay whereby the business provides the venue and a minimum of 10 delegates and we provide the rest! Hotels, nurseries, care homes and charities have all chosen this option as being best for them. In the New Year we will also be offering a series of training and associated exams including emergency first aid and paediatric first aid. So if you run a big hotel or are a child centre provider, you may be interested to see how we compare.

Please email [Isobelle.belcher@torbay.gov.uk](mailto:Isobelle.belcher@torbay.gov.uk) for details on prices.

## 'Meet The Buyer' Torbay Council Local Businesses Event

Wednesday 07 February 2018

10:00am – 12:30pm

Torbay Town Hall, Torquay TQ1 3DR

Torbay Council is hosting an event for local businesses to provide an overview of its procurement processes. The proposed timetable for the event is:

10:00am	Welcome and Introductions
10:10am	Introduction to Council Buyers and Procurement Pipeline
11:00am	Procurement Process Overview
11:45am	Q & A Session
12:30pm	Close

To reserve your place please contact:

[procurement.team@torbay.gov.uk](mailto:procurement.team@torbay.gov.uk)

Places will be limited to two per organisation

Please Note: it is not a requirement of any future procurement process that you must attend this event, in order to be able to take part.

# Council Advertising Options

You may not be aware that Torbay Council offer a range of advertising options to local businesses, from car park and town centre poster boards in areas of high foot fall, to website advertising and vehicle advertising. We can also offer sponsorship packages for high profile local events. You can also advertise to Torbay council employees using our staff intranet service.

With an average of over half a million page views every month, there's never been a better time to get your business noticed on our website. Torbay Councils website is a point of reference for a population of circa 100,000 people each month. With Christmas promotions in full swing, we offer banner advertising on our website on a page to suit you. The cost is a fixed price of £100.00 per month excluding VAT, and your advert will be the sole advert on the chosen page.

Poster board advertising in the retail areas of Torquay and Paignton starts from £20.00 per week excluding VAT. The price includes the installation of your artwork. We also have some A2 advertising boards in car park lift lobbies across the bay available to local businesses.

We also have advertising space now available on a fleet of Local Authority owned vehicles. These vehicles are in constant circulation around the bay ensuring maximum visibility. Depending on your requirements we can make sure your advert is targeted to particular areas or to the whole community helping you reach the right audience.

All of our advertising options offer access to a wide audience at cost effective prices. If any of these options are of interest to you, please get in touch for more information.

[businessdevelopment@torbay.gov.uk](mailto:businessdevelopment@torbay.gov.uk)

01803 207953



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For further information please contact 01803 208025.