

Food and Safety

- Focus on Pubs and Clubs

ISSUE 3
NOVEMBER 2007

The Smoking Ban, a few months on...

The smoking ban has now been in place for long enough for most people to adjust and Braintree District has had a very high compliance rate. Thank you for your efforts in making this happen.

Unfortunately in some cases moving smokers from inside to outside has created different challenges which have been addressed in different ways. There is no legal requirement to provide smoking shelters but many licenced establishments have done, or propose to do so to provide a dry smoking area (don't forget to check with Planning Services to see whether you need planning permission for any shelter that you are proposing. There is also guidance on the website about shelters)

In premises where customers are going outside where previously they didn't, has occasionally resulted in issues of noise, litter, light and smoke affecting neighbours.

Your license will specify to what extent you are able to use the outside of your premises for licensable activities (music, drinking etc). There is still a duty to control activity on your premises and prevent disturbance to your neighbours. If you feel that your license is too restrictive you must apply for a variation prior to making any changes.

Lighting

Should be low power, energy saving and directed only to illuminate the area required. Try to prevent over-spill of lighting onto any other property, or glare.

Litter

Ash trays provided where smokers congregate will prevent the accumulation of rubbish on the floor, but these will still need to be emptied and the area maintained.

Noise

Customers shouting to each other or engaged in heated conversation can be very disturbing to neighbours. Clearly legible signs reminding customers to respect the neighbours may help, or other intervention where necessary if excessive noise occurs. Patio style heaters not only add excessively to the carbon footprint of your business but encourage customers to stay outside for longer than they would otherwise, adding to the potential for disturbance.

Smoke

Smokers should be encouraged to use areas away from residential boundaries if at all possible so as not to affect neighbours.

What help is there for staff to stop smoking?

The NHS offers a wide range of excellent, free and easily accessible support for smokers including local NHS Stop Smoking Services, the Together Programme, the NHS Smoking Helpline - 0800 169 0169, and nicotine replacement therapy (NRT) on prescription. For details of stop smoking services in the East of England, visit www.smokefreeeast.co.uk

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DID YOU KNOW?

- Braintree Council are introducing a healthy eating award in conjunction with other Essex Authorities. We particularly want pubs who have regular customers to come forward to pilot the healthy eating award. We aim to publicise award winners. See Page 8
- Braintree District Council offer a one day course for food handlers to obtain The Chartered Institute of Environmental Health Level II Award in Food Safety in Catering.

Have you heard of SFBB ?

From 1st January 2006 a number of food hygiene regulations came into force.

Almost all of the requirements in the new regulations are the same as those before. The main new requirement is that you must be able to show what you do to make or sell food that is safe to eat and have this written down.

In practice, this means that you must have procedures in place to manage food safety 'hazards' in your business. You are now required to write these procedures down, update them as needed and keep records that can be checked by your local authority.

The regulations are designed to be flexible, so these procedures can be in proportion to the size of your business and the type of work that you do. This means that many small businesses will be able to have very simple procedures and simple records. The 'food safety management procedures' you put in place must be based on the principles of HACCP (hazard analysis critical control point).

What is HACCP?

HACCP involves the following-

- Looking closely at what you do in your business and what could go wrong.
- Identifying the 'critical control points'- these are the places you need to focus on to prevent hazards or reduce them to an acceptable level.
- Putting in place procedures to make sure hazards are controlled at critical control points.
- Deciding what action you need to take if something goes wrong.
- Making sure that your procedures are working.
- Keeping appropriate records to show your procedures are working.

If you do not already have suitable procedures in place you can develop your own based on the principles of HACCP.

Safer Food Better Business

Alternatively you can use a pack produced by the Food Standards Agency. Safer Food Better Business has been developed for small catering businesses.

It is made up of 'safe method' sheets and a diary. The safe methods highlight things that are important to make food safely. They are designed so that each business can tick boxes, or make brief notes, to show how it works. The safe methods also provide advice on what to do if things go wrong.

You can order a copy of Safer Food Better Business or diary refills by contacting the FSA on Tel no: 0845 606 0667 or Email: foodstandards@ecgroup.uk.com

If you would like help in understanding or completing the pack please ring us for an appointment on 01376 551414 x 2211



Accident Notification

Are you aware that many accidents have to be reported to your enforcing authority

Reporting allows a proper investigation of the accident to be made (if necessary) to ensure that lessons are learnt and recurrences are prevented. The statistics collected also allow a picture to be drawn up of trends in numbers and types of accidents throughout the country.

The types of accidents which must

be notified are:-

- fatalities, Major accidents,
- accidents which result in the employee being unable to do their normal work for more than three days,
- accidents which result in a member of the public (including children) being taken to hospital.

Accident details must be reported to the new incident contact centre.

Incident Contact Centre

Phone : 0845 300 9923

Fax 0845 300 9924

Internet: www.riddor.gov.uk

e-mail riddor@natbrit.com

Post:

Incident Contact Centre,
Caerphilly Business
Park, Caerphilly CF83 3GG

Risk Assessment

A Risk Assessment is a careful examination of hazards in your workplace, so that you weigh up whether you have taken enough precautions or should do more to prevent harm. It is important to understand the difference between hazard & risk.

Hazard: - Anything that could cause harm, such as lifting children, fire, electricity.

Risk: - The likelihood or chance that someone will be harmed by the hazard.

The main requirements of a risk assessment are as follows:

- Identify the hazards.
- Identify the people at risk, including special groups such as young people.

- Decide whether the risks are significant.
- Eliminate or reduce the risk by introducing safety measures.
- Review periodically & whenever working procedures change.

If you have 5+ employees (in this premises, or in the chain if you are part of a group of premises), the law requires that you put the important findings of your risk assessments in writing.

Risk assessment leaflets are available to download from the HSE website (www.hse.gov.uk), and example risk assessments for pubs (and other types of premises) can be found on our website.

There are many different ways of

carrying out a risk assessment, some are quite complicated and score or colour risks in order of priority. Our examples are in a very simple format, one that we find most businesses and their employees more importantly can follow and understand.

If the example risk assessment on the website is of use to you please download it and amend it to reflect the hazards found at your premises and the control measures that you either have in place, or need to put in place.

Alternatively, we can send you a hard copy of the example risk assessment.

Risk assessments need to be reviewed regularly (we recommend annually), or following changes (eg new equipment / procedures), or following an accident or near miss.

Food Poisoning

Good Food hygiene is essential in reducing the risk of food poisoning and protects your reputation. There are 4 areas to remember

CLEANING

Effective cleaning gets rid of bacteria on hands, equipment and surfaces so it helps to stop bacteria from spreading on to food.

- Make sure you and your staff thoroughly wash and dry their hands before handling food.
- Clean and disinfect surfaces and equipment between tasks, especially after handling raw food.
- Clean as you go.
- Use the correct cleaning products and follow instructions carefully.
- Don't let food waste build up.

COOKING

Thorough cooking kills harmful bacteria in food. It is extremely important to make sure that food is cooked properly. Undercooked food could cause food poisoning.

- Check food is piping hot all the way through (Don't reheat more than once)
- It is especially important to thoroughly cook poultry, pork,

rolled joints and minced meat products such as burgers. These types of food should NEVER be served rare.

CHILLING

Chilling of food properly stops bacteria from growing and multiplying. Some foods need to be kept chilled to keep them safe, for example, food with a use by date, food that you have cooked and will not serve immediately, or other ready to eat foods such as prepared salads.

"It is extremely important to make sure that food is cooked properly. Undercooked food could cause food poisoning"

- Check chilled food on delivery to make sure it is cold (<8°C)
- Put foods that need to be chilled in the fridge straight away.
- Cool cooked foods as quickly as possible and put in the fridge.
- Check your fridges regularly to ensure they are cold enough.

CROSS CONTAMINATION

Cross contamination is when bacteria spread between food surfaces or equipment. It is most likely to happen when raw food touches (or drips onto) ready to eat food, equipment or surfaces.

Hands can spread bacteria. If you touch raw then cooked foods without washing your hands thoroughly, bacteria can be spread to the objects you then touch. Keep raw and ready to eat foods apart at all times.

- Wash hands thoroughly after touching raw foods.
- Use separate chopping boards and knives for raw and ready to eat food.
- Clean and disinfect work surfaces, chopping boards and equipment thoroughly before starting to prepare food and after you have used them to prepare raw food.
- Keep raw food below ready to eat food in the fridge.

Pasteurised Egg

Should be used in any egg dishes that will not be cooked or only lightly cooked e.g. mousse, cheesecake, mayonnaise.

SLIPS AND TRIPS AT WORK

Over a third of all major injuries reported each year are as a result of a slip or trip.

By taking simple, practical measures you could reduce your costs

- Look for slip and trip hazards around the pub, club and garden, such as slippery, simple uneven flooring or paving, changes in level, loose cables, decking
- Decide who may be harmed and how.
- If existing precautions are not sufficient decide what further action to take to reduce the risk.
- It is a good idea to record your findings
- Regularly review your assessment.

Particularly if you have any slip / trip accidents, or if you make any significant changes. Choose suitable floor surfaces, ensure lighting levels are sufficient, train any staff you may have in the correct use of any cleaning equipment.

Take care not to create additional slip or trip hazards while cleaning and maintenance work is being done.

DO NOT rely on the use of the wet floor sign — wet clean flooring when the pub is closed. If you have a wet spill whilst the public or employees are in the area, cordon off the area and use dry cleaning methods—



Try and change methods rather than rely on wet floors signs

eg mop, then clean with a dry mop or paper towel.

Floors need to be checked for loose finishes, holes and cracks, take care in your choice of floor if it is likely to become wet or muddy.

Obstructions and objects left lying around can cause a trip.

Try to keep tidy and if obstructions can't be removed, use barriers

Laughing Gas — why not to provide it at your premises

You may be aware there have been a number of examples recently of nightclubs supplying, or permitting the supply of, Nitrous Oxide (also known as laughing gas, NOs or hippy crack) for customers to inhale. Typically the nitrous oxide is contained in a small cylinder which is then used to fill a balloon from which the gas is inhaled. We are aware that not all duty holders appreciate that this activity is illegal and this article is intended to clarify the legal position regarding the supply of Nitrous Oxide.

Nitrous Oxide is a pharmacy only medicine when prepared for inhalation and may only be supplied in this form by a registered pharmacist on the premises of a registered pharmacy. This is the case even where the nitrous oxide has been originally supplied for some other purpose (e.g. whipping cream).

The act of supplying nitrous oxide for the purpose of inhalation makes it a medicinal product and anyone other than a registered pharmacist supplying nitrous oxide for the purposes of inhalation on your premises is committing the offence under Section 52 of the Medicines Act 1968 of selling and/or supply-

ing a pharmacy medicine not under the control of a pharmacist. Any duty holder at your premises who allows nitrous oxide to be supplied in the circumstances described above commits

The offence of aiding and abetting an offence under s.52

“Nitrous oxide can cause injury, ill health or even death”

of the Medicines Act 1968. These offences carry a maximum sentence of two years in prison and/or an unlimited fine.

In addition there are genuine health risks attached to the use of Nitrous Oxide, both directly resulting from its consumption and in terms of injuries resulting from a fall induced by its effects (which are produced by starving health (including bone marrow suppression, blood cell problems and poisoning of the central nervous system). These risks are likely to be exacerbated if the drug is combined with alcohol or other narcotics. The risks are particularly severe for pregnant women.

Under the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974 you have a duty to

protect people on your premises (including customers) from risks to their health and safety. Allowing the supply of nitrous oxide on your premises would render you liable to prosecution under the Act. The promotion of public safety is one of the core objectives of the Licensing Act 2003, under which your premises is licensed and concern about the safety of members of the public using your premises could have implications for your licence(s).

Duty holders at a premises where nitrous oxide was supplied to a customer who subsequently suffered injury, ill-health or death would probably be liable in civil law for damages. They would almost certainly find that their insurance did not cover any resultant costs. If this authority becomes aware that premises are supplying or allowing the supply of Nitrous Oxide we will inform the MHRA and pass on to them any relevant evidence. The MHRA has indicated that it will prosecute. You are therefore advised to take all necessary steps to ensure that nitrous oxide is not being supplied on your premises and advised to contact the police, the MHRA or this authority should you become aware that any group or individual is attempting to use your premises to supply it.

Do you have living accommodation at your premises?

If the accommodation above your business is used to house staff or is privately let you have a responsibility to ensure that:-

- The accommodation is suitable for occupation and that there are no significant hazards to the health and safety of the tenant.
- There are adequate bathing and toilet facilities provided
- There are adequate provisions for the preparation of food



Pub with living accommodation above

- There are adequate means of escape in the event of fire

If the property (including the commercial part) is three storeys or more and the residential part is occupied by 5 or more individuals you could require an HMO licence from the Local Authority. Further information on your responsibilities can be obtained from the Public Health and Housing Team at Braintree District Council, tel 01376 552525 x 2221.

Foundation Certificate In Food Safety

Regulation EC 852/2004 requires that all persons who handle food are supervised, instructed and/or trained in food

hygiene to a level appropriate to their duties. Braintree District Council offer a one day course for food handlers to obtain The Chartered

Institute of Health Level 2 Foundation Certificate in Food Safety. Subjects covered during the course include :

“Are your staff supervised, instructed and/or trained in food hygiene to a level appropriate to their duties?”

Food Poisoning, Bacteriology, Personal Hygiene, Allergen contamination Cleaning, Pest Control,

Requirements under law including the new requirement for a food safety management system.

At the end of the training sessions candidates sit a multiple choice examination paper. A timescale of about 2 weeks should be allowed for results and certificates to be returned from the

Institute.

The cost of the course is £52.00 per candidate. It is recommended that a refresher course is taken after a 3 year period.

Whilst this is the only qualification that Braintree District Council offers, information and enquiries for Advanced and other courses may be obtained on ext: 2211.

Currently we run the course once a month at Causeway House, Braintree.

For further information ring 01376 552525 Ext: 2211 or look on our webpage.

The Noise at Work Regulations

In April 2008 new regulations to protect workers in the music and entertainment sectors from exposure to excessive noise will come into force (Control of Noise at Work Regulations 2005 (Noise Regulations)). For other industry sectors these Regulations have been in force since April 2006. The European Directive (2003/10/EC) on which the Regulations are based allowed the music and entertainment sectors a two-

year transitional period. This recognised that music is unusual as it is noise deliberately created for enjoyment and therefore practical guidelines are necessary to help workers, employers and freelancers in the music and entertainment sectors protect their hearing and safeguard their careers. Music and entertainment sectors are defined in the Noise Regulations as all workplaces

where a) live music is played or b) recorded music is played in a restaurant, bar, public house, discotecque or nightclub, or alongside live music or a live dramatic or dance performance. The music and entertainment sectors will have the benefit of sector-specific practical guidelines drafted by your industry representatives. This will outline good practice in achieving compliance and

Continued on page 7

Do you have a bouncy castle at your premises ?

Bouncy castles and other inflatables are the cause of many accidents. If you wish to provide a bouncy castle please make sure that you take the following steps before and during use:-

- Carryout a risk assessment, this should be documented.
- Ensure supervision is adequate (do not rely on parental supervision, check that it is adequate and if it is not provide staff to supervise).
- Make sure that you know what the maximum weight and height restrictions are for your inflatable and ensure that these are not exceeded.
- Ensure that you can prevent the use of the bouncy castle by mixed age uses
- Ensure that staff involved in the supervision of the bouncy castle are adequately trained.
- Ensure that you have sufficient anchorage points,
- Ensure that you do not cause a trip hazard with the power lead or anchorage points
- Make sure that your bouncy castle is in a good safe condition at all times and that it is tagged to show that it has been tested within the last year.
- carry out daily checks
- Make sure you have sufficient Public Liability Insurance
- Annual inspections should be carried out by PIPA or ADIPS

Never

- Permit children to climb the walls,
- Deflate the inflatable whilst its in use
- Use the inflatable in high winds
- Use the inflatable if you have any doubts about its safety

Bouncy castles can also be the source of disturbance to neighbours through screaming from users, pumps, compressors or generators. Neighbours will be more tolerant if hours are limited and night time use is avoided.



Bouncy castle

Scores on the Doors

Recently there has been a rise in consumer interest in how compliant food premises are with food hygiene legislation. Many Local Authorities have now followed the example of other countries and introduced a 'scores on the doors' style system.

Often these systems comprise of star ratings with 5 stars indicating excellent standards through to no stars indicating poor standards and management. Stars are awarded based on findings from the last inspection.

The systems are internet based and searchable by text, enabling customers to search for premises and make informed decisions before choosing to eat at establishments.

Certificates are also issued to

premises to display in a prominent place.

There are several schemes in place across the country and Braintree District Council are currently considering the most widely used system— Scores on the doors.

Locally, Southend Borough Council are already live using this system whilst Colchester Borough Council have an in house own system. Other Essex Authorities are also looking at launching systems in the near future.

If we decide to introduce a system it will be likely to come in in the next 6-9 months.

Should we decide to go ahead there will be contact with stakeholders such as yourselves to keep you well informed.

We urge you to look at other

councils websites, or search for businesses in other districts using the scores on the doors website to see how it could look across the Braintree District, and for your business.

The increase in compliance with food hygiene legislation in areas that have introduced scores on the doors has reportedly been significant, and as a Council is an opportunity to raise standards that we cannot afford to miss.

We hope that you will ensure that your businesses are fully compliant with food hygiene regulations, and if you have any queries or are not sure about what is required to comply with legislation please do not hesitate to contact the Health

Protection team on 01376 552525 x 2211

The Noise at Work Regulations continued

Continued from page 5
should be available shortly before April 2008.

Useful information on what the noise at work regulations cover, with specific information for the music and entertainment sector can be found on the HSE webpage (www.hse.gov.uk/noise). Also included are several real life stories—accounts from people who have worked in the music industry and now have hearing damage.

When we carry out a health and safety inspection at your premises, the inspector will ask to see your noise risk assessment if you have live or recorded music. This document should tell the inspector what the typical noise levels in your premises are at different locations and whether they are satisfactory or not. If the noise levels are too high the risk assessment should specify what controls are going to be put in place and by when to ensure that your employees are not exposed to levels of noise in excess of the action levels given in the Regulations.

If you haven't already thought about noise levels now is the time to do so. Broadly speaking you are likely to need to

reduce noise levels if you have to shout to be heard when you are speaking to someone 2m or less away from you (eg when serving at the bar). Control measures that you could consider might be to install a noise limiter to the premises to restrict the noise levels that can be played, and / or you might

*Hearing loss caused by
noise at work is
Preventable, act now*

move speakers (they certainly be directed towards your bar staff), you may need to ensure that your staff rotate jobs throughout the noise to reduce their exposure times in areas where the noise levels are greatest.

Your DJ in particular is at risk. If they, or any of your staff report ringing in their ears or are sensitive to noise they may already have some hearing damage.

Health surveillance or hearing checks are vital to detect and respond to early signs of damage.

Act now before one of your staff reports hearing damage.

Food allergy

Food allergy is a specific form of food intolerance that involves the body's immune system.

Food allergy symptoms can be mild but because they can be life threatening it is very important that anybody working with food is allergy aware. Many foods can cause an allergic reaction — the most common are Milk, Eggs, Peanuts (Monkey nuts or groundnuts), Nuts (inc brazil nuts, hazelnuts, almonds & walnuts), Fish, Shellfish, Soya and Wheat. Celery, mustard, gluten, sesame seeds & sulphur dioxide can also trigger allergic reactions.

Anaphylaxis

This is a reaction that can be life threatening, it can occur as an allergic response to a food. It is very important that those people who handle, prepare and/or serve food understand how to control the risks posed by food allergies. If you don't know what ingredients are in a food or product, always seek advice, NEVER guess. Be aware that although a food may not contain a certain ingredient it may still cause a reaction if it has been contaminated by the ingredient at some point in preparation. There is a page on food allergies in the SFBB packs. To reduce the risk of an incident in your premises:-

- Ensure staff know how to check all contents of a dish if asked by someone with a food allergy
- Keep ingredient lists for all products and make sure staff know where this is kept,
- make sure equipment is properly cleaned when preparing a dish for an allergy sufferer.
- Provide good descriptions on your menus,
- Train staff in food allergy

Beer line cleaning

Beer line cleaner is usually one of the most hazardous chemical we find in a pub / club environment.

- Make sure all staff using it have been fully trained,
- Ensure the COSHH assessment is complete and staff are aware of it
- Provide correct PPE & ensure it is always used by staff (goggles, gloves and apron as a minimum).
- Always follow the manufac-

turers instructions (strength & contact time)

- Pipes need to be cleaned at least every 7 days to prevent build ups of yeast and bacteria.
- Make sure that there is pipe cleaner is NEVER left in pipes during trading hours.
- Display a DANGER pipe cleaning in progress sign is displayed behind the bar.

Cellar access

Accidents have happened when staff or customers have fallen through open cellar hatches. If your cellar is in the basement make sure this cannot happen by ensuring that you have taken all necessary precautions. Ideally relocate the cellar access away from the public areas or from behind the bar. If this is not practical ensure that you have a safe system of work that all staff are aware of and that it is used every time the hatch is opened. Essentially you need to make sure that no-one can fall through the hatch whilst it is open. Ideally this should be by physically blocking access to the hatch. A chain is not sufficient for this purpose as chains have been known to break under pressure. Ideally the hatch should not be opened when the bar is open.

Ensure that steps down to the cellar are safe (treads sufficient and steps & any coverings in good condition). There should be a handrail (in good condition) on at least on one side of the stairs and lighting must be sufficient at all times on the stairs and in the cellar itself.

If your draymen have a separate access to the cellar for deliveries make sure that the access that they use is also in good condition — if the steps have been worn over time rebuild the steps to provide a good tread, and again, provide a handrail.

Essex Healthy Eating Award

The Essex Food Liaison Group together with the Chartered Institute of Environmental Health are currently promoting a new healthy eating award in Essex.

We hope to promote healthy eating within Catering Businesses by issuing either Gold or Silver Healthy Eating Awards to eligible businesses.

Initially the award will be trialled and we welcome premises to volunteer for the trial. If the scheme proves to be successful in the trials across Essex the hope is that the award will be open to all businesses in Essex to apply for.

We hope that by gaining such an award, your customers will recognise the commitment that you have made to providing them with healthier options when they choose to eat at your establishment. You will also find that simple steps can be adopted to improve the knowledge of healthier foods and healthier catering practices for your business.

If you are interested in trialling the scheme or would like to discuss the scheme in further detail, please ring 01376 551414 x 2211. If you are interested, an application pack for the healthy eating award will be sent out to you. Once the application form has been completed and returned an officer will arrange to come to your business to discuss your application.

It is anticipated that there will be publicity for the business who have trialled the scheme within Essex.



HEALTH PROTECTION
CAUSEWAY HOUSE
BRAINTREE
CM7 9HB

Phone: 01376 552525 EXT 2211

Fax: 01376 557767

Email:

health_protection@braintree.gov.uk

Making a Difference

We're on the web!
[www.braintree.gov.uk/
environment/food/
default.htm](http://www.braintree.gov.uk/environment/food/default.htm)
And
[www.braintree.gov.uk/
health+and+safety/](http://www.braintree.gov.uk/health+and+safety/)

Useful websites

www.food.gov.uk

The Food Standards Agency.
Advice on all food matters.

www.hse.gov.uk

The main site of the Health and Safety Executive. This contains a link to the 'Workers web page' (relevant info for employees).

www.riddor.gov.uk

The incident contact centre (ICC)
– see article on accident reporting.

www.cieh.org.uk

Details of food and safety courses.
Advice on careers in environmental health.

www.smokefreeengland.co.uk

Information and advice about the legislation