

FOOD FOCUS

Food Services Newsletter

Issue 41 – Winter 2017



EAST RIDING
OF YORKSHIRE COUNCIL

Editorial

By Andrew Buxton, Food Services Manager

Welcome to the winter 2017 edition of *FOOD FOCUS*, in which you'll find articles across a range of food safety and standards issues that have emerged in recent months. We hope the news, information and advice in this edition will help food business operators and their staff striving to maintain good standards and legal compliance.

As sign-posted in *FOOD FOCUS 40*, it has now been confirmed that from January 2018 a cost recovery charge of £130 will be introduced for businesses requesting a Food Hygiene Rating Scheme (FHRS) Re-inspection. The introduction of a charge for this elective service is part of a wider on-going Council review of discretionary non-statutory activity. Further background is given in this edition's FHRS Update article on page 2.

For many food businesses, this is one of the busiest times of year and unfortunately it is during such periods that mistakes may occur. In the past we have been involved in a number of incidents that have taken the joy out of Christmas for some businesses and their customers, often due to over-stretch and compromise of normal routines. It is important that increased business is matched by responsible management and resources to meet business demand, and also increasingly demanding customers. Especially in the catering sector, there is a need to review provision of accurate allergen information and controls, particularly where new seasonal menu items are introduced and for the instruction and supervision of any temporary staff. On behalf of the Food Services team and myself our very best wishes for a safe Christmas trading period and a successful 2018.

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STAY INFORMED:

In order that you receive the latest edition of Food Focus we need to ensure that we have your current e-mail address. You can keep us up to date by any of the following means:

- Visiting our website and subscribing to our mailing list here:
<http://www2.eastriding.gov.uk/EasySiteWeb/GatewayLink.aspx?allId=101079>
- E-mailing us at Food.Services@eastriding.gov.uk

National FOOD HYGIENE RATING SCHEME Update

The Food Hygiene Rating Scheme (FHRS) helps consumers choose where to eat out or shop for food by giving them information about the hygiene standards at food premises. The FSA's FHRS website provides for each premises, details of the individual component scores and findings making up the overall rating; in terms of 'Hygienic food handling', 'Cleanliness and condition of facilities and building', and 'Management of food safety'. Consumers are able to make their choices based not only on the overall scores, but also based on the nature of any shortfalls in compliance identified by officers.



As we reported previously earlier this year, the FSA amended the 'Brand Standard' under which the FHRS operates to introduce the scope for local authorities to recover costs incurred through their response to business requests for FHRS re-inspection. This change has been made in response to the increasing budget and resource pressures faced by local authorities. Since FHRS re-inspections cause an added unscheduled burden on the council and divert officers from undertaking interventions in other premises.

The Department for Business Energy and Industrial Strategy (BEIS) has encouraged local authorities to impose charges for advice and activity that goes beyond basic requirements. Accordingly, the Council's Public Protection Group services have undertaken an on-going review of all discretionary non-statutory activity, such as FHRS Re-inspections. In September, Cabinet approval was given for Food Business Operator requested FHRS re-inspection visits, to be subject to charges supportive of full cost recovery.

Arrangements are now being made to commence charging for FHRS Re-inspections from 2018. Application for a FHRS Re-inspection will have to be made on-line via the Council's website. Full instructions for the process will be given on the website, including details for pre-payment for the FHRS Re-inspection at the time of application. At this time the anticipated cost is £130 per FHRS Re-inspection.

At the time of publication East Riding food businesses currently have the following rating

FOOD HYGIENE RATING

| | | | | | |
|-----------------------------------|----|----|--------------------------------|-----|------|
| 2 | 47 | 51 | 263 | 463 | 1976 |
| | | | | | |
| 3.6% Not Broadly Compliant | | | 96.4% Broadly Compliant | | |

The Food Standard Agency's national FHRS website can be found at: <http://ratings.food.gov.uk/>

Use of eggs by caterers

The Food Standards Agency has recently changed their advice about eating eggs - infants, children, pregnant women and elderly people can now safely eat raw or lightly cooked eggs that are produced under the British Lion Code of Practice. This advice **does not** include severely immunocompromised individuals and only applies to eggs which are produced under the British Lion Code of Practice. The FSA previously advised that vulnerable groups should not consume raw or lightly cooked eggs, because they may contain Salmonella bacteria which can cause serious illness.



British Lion Quality

Eggs produced under the British Lion Code of Practice are stamped with the British Lion Quality mark, as shown in the image on the left. Eggs produced under the scheme have to meet additional standards to those that are not produced within the scheme. British Lion Quality eggs are from hens vaccinated against Salmonella. In addition to the logo the eggs are also stamped with a 'best before date'.

The change in the advice is as a result of the latest scientific evidence from an expert group set up by the Advisory Committee on the Microbiological Safety of Food (ACMSF) in February 2015 to look at egg safety. Its report, published in July 2016, highlighted that the presence of Salmonella in UK eggs has been dramatically reduced in recent years, and the risks are very low for eggs which have been produced according to food safety controls applied by the British Lion Code of Practice. More than 90% of UK eggs are produced under this scheme. A range of interventions have been put in place across the food chain as part of the scheme including: vaccinating hens, enhanced testing for Salmonella, improved farm hygiene, effective rodent control, independent auditing and traceability, and keeping eggs cool while transporting them from farm to shop.

Class A eggs must only be used in food businesses

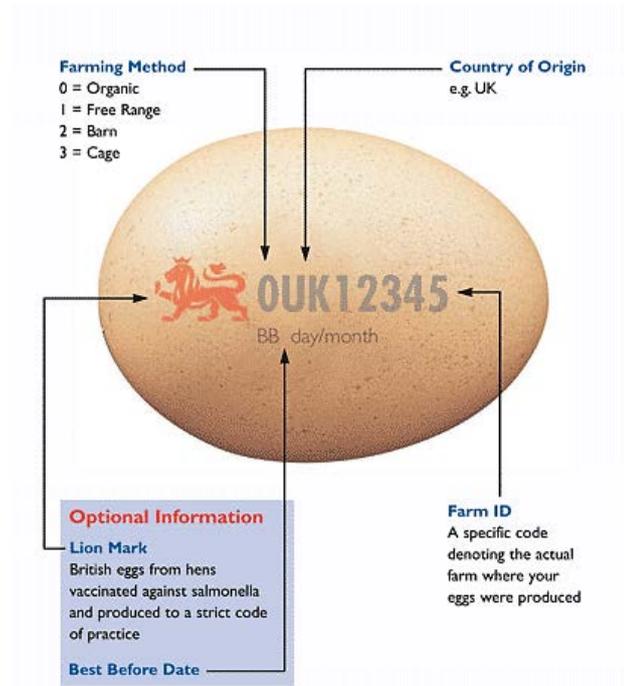
To ensure that eggs are safely being used within food business **only** Class A eggs can be used. These eggs have been graded to ensure they are fit for human consumption and have met a strict specification. No other type of eggs can be used in catering premises and all eggs should be correctly marked and labelled. Eggs that are from domestic laying hens are not categorised as Class A eggs and cannot be used.

How to identify Class A codes:

Class A eggs are legally required to be stamped with **mandatory** information showing the type of farming system, country of origin and the production unit as illustrated:

Mandatory information includes:

- Farming Method
 - 0 = Organic
 - 1 = Free Range
 - 2 = Barn
 - 3 = Cage
- Country of Origin e.g. UK = United Kingdom, PO = Poland, ES = Spain
- Farm Identification Number for traceability purposes.



The British Lion Quality logo and the best before date is **optional** information that may not be on the egg. Whilst it is permitted to use eggs from abroad, these may have a significantly higher risk of being contaminated with Salmonella and some have therefore been involved in food poisoning outbreaks resulting in product recalls. The Food Services team therefore advises caterers to use eggs that have been produced within the United Kingdom, from vaccinated stock such as British Lion Quality eggs. Any eggs not meeting these requirements **must not** be served raw, even as an ingredient, or lightly cooked to vulnerable consumers.

Best before date

This can be on the packaging or the egg. Food business operators must check to ensure that eggs are used by the best before date. Eggs must not be used after the expiration of the best before date.

Handling eggs

- Eggs are classed as raw items and should be kept away from ready to eat foods.
- Don't use eggs that are damaged or have cracked shells.
- Prepare eggs away from ready to eat foods.
- When breaking out a number of eggs to use, the liquid egg must be kept in the refrigerator and used up that day.
- Don't keep topping up liquid egg.
- Avoid dripping egg onto surfaces or other foods and clean up any spillages immediately.
- Ensure that any utensils and containers are thoroughly washed with hot soapy water.
- Remember to clean down work surfaces first with hot soapy water and then finish with an antibacterial cleaner.
- Most importantly always wash and dry hands after handling eggs.



egg handling advice

According to the Advisory Committee on the Microbiological Safety of Food, the very low risk level from eggs produced under the Lion Code, or produced under demonstrably equivalent comprehensive schemes, means that they can be served raw or lightly cooked to all groups in society, including those that are more vulnerable to infection, in both domestic and commercial settings, including care homes and hospitals.

However, as with all foods, it is important that eggs are handled correctly in order to minimise the risk of cross-contamination.

Growth of Salmonella can be prevented or minimised by low temperature storage, particularly in the kitchen, where temperature fluctuations can accelerate changes to yolk membrane permeability.

The advantages of low temperature storage are threefold: Salmonella, if present, is unable to multiply; the yolk membrane remains essentially unchanged for long periods of storage; and any Salmonellas present may be rendered more heat-sensitive by prior exposure to low temperature.

Eggs should therefore be kept at a constant temperature below 20°C to prevent deterioration in yolk membrane permeability and minimise growth of any micro-organisms that may be present. Caterers should store eggs in a refrigerator. If this is not possible they should be

stored in the coolest storage area available and orders kept to a minimum volume and regularly delivered.

To avoid the risk of higher temperatures and of temperature fluctuations in a typical domestic kitchen, consumers should place eggs in the refrigerator as soon as possible after purchase.

Eggs should be stored separately from other foods, preferably in the egg box and should be brought up to room temperature before cooking.

At room temperature homogenised liquid egg provides an ideal medium for the growth of micro-organisms and it is therefore essential to avoid any risk of cross-contamination from other foods.

Cooked egg dishes should be eaten as soon as possible after cooking and, if not for immediate use, should be stored in the refrigerator.

Hands should always be washed before and after handling shell eggs. Cracked or dirty eggs should not be used.

In the catering industry, pasteurised egg products may be substituted for raw eggs for ease and convenience and where eggs are pooled.

For more information about eggs visit <https://www.egginfo.co.uk/british-lion-eggs>

Three steps to effective cleaning and disinfection

Step 1 – Choose the chemicals carefully

It is essential to use the correct cleaning materials. Using the wrong materials can have serious consequences, such as survival of food poisoning bacteria on work surfaces and may also make the task of cleaning harder than it needs to be. The instructions on the product label will provide information about the type of product and what its intended uses are.



The main types of cleaning chemicals expected to be found in a food business are listed below:

- **Detergents** generally do not kill bacteria, unless there is an antibacterial chemical added. A detergent is used to remove dirt and grease.
- **Degreasers** are more effective than detergents for cleaning very greasy surfaces. They do not kill bacteria but they help to clean surfaces heavily coated with grease/oils.
- **Disinfectants** reduce bacteria to a safe level. They should be used correctly on visibly clean surfaces and must be of a 'food safe' type. This type of chemical has to be given enough time to reduce the bacteria to a safe level ('contact time'). It is vitally important to clean items or areas with a detergent before using a disinfectant. Cleaning the surface with a detergent first reduces the amount of bacteria on it and allows the disinfectant to work more efficiently.
- **Sanitisers** are chemicals which combine both detergent and disinfectant properties. They must be 'food safe'. In order for the disinfectant element of the sanitiser to work effectively a 'two stage' clean must be carried out. The surface should be cleaned so that it is visibly clean and then the sanitiser re-applied for the 'contact time' to allow the disinfectant to work.

Cleaning chemicals used to control the risk of contamination between raw and ready to eat food surfaces or equipment must comply with the requirements of BS EN1276:1997 or BS EN 13697:2001. Chemicals can be checked to see if they comply by looking at the label or on the following website:

<http://www.disinfectant-info.co.uk/>

Step 2 – Application of the chemical

Food must be moved out of the way or covered during cleaning. This is to prevent dirt, bacteria or chemicals from contaminating it.

Chemicals must be used in accordance with manufacturers' instructions. The three key instructions to check are:

- **'Dilution rate'**: this information is on the label and/or on the safety data sheets. Food businesses should contact their supplier where this information is not available. Never guess the dilution rate. Always measure the chemical out accurately and to the level marked onto the spray bottle, if this is to be used to dispense the product.
- **Application**: staff must have received appropriate instruction, training and or supervision about application of cleaning materials. Information is available in ['Safer Food, Better Business'](#), specifically the cleaning and management sections. Staff must follow the manufacturer's instructions for the use and application of the chemical and be provided with the correct materials to carry out the method of cleaning.
- **'Contact time'**: this is the time stated by the manufacturer for how long the chemical needs to be left on a surface in order to kill bacteria. This varies between products and can range between 30 seconds to 15 minutes. It is advisable to use a chemical with a short contact time as it is more practical in a busy food premises. It is vital that the contact time is adhered to. If the chemical is not left on the surface for the sufficient period of time it will not be effective. Many cleaning and disinfectant chemicals need to be rinsed away with clean water after the 'contact time' and this must be done carefully and thoroughly to avoid contamination.

Disposable single-use cloths are recommended for cleaning surfaces and equipment. When these are not provided then separate cloths must be used for 'raw food' and 'ready to eat food' areas and changed frequently when dirty (and at least daily) to reduce the risk of cross-contamination.

If cloths are re-used they must be thoroughly cleaned after use in a hot wash above 82°C. Chemical cleaning in bleach alone is not appropriate as organic matter, such as grease, dirt or food, left on the cloths can stop the disinfectant from working properly and there is also a risk of contamination from chemical residues on the cloth post cleaning.

Step 3 – Cleaning Schedule

A cleaning schedule, as illustrated below, helps to ensure regular cleaning in all areas of a food business, especially in areas that might otherwise be forgotten. Draw up a cleaning schedule for the kitchen and stick to it. Detailed information is available in the Safer Food Better Business pack available at:

<https://www.food.gov.uk/business-industry/caterers/sfbb/sfbbcaterers>

Visit the Food Standards Agency’s website at <https://www.food.gov.uk/business-industry/food-hygiene/training#toc-3> to watch a training video about cleaning.

EXAMPLE OF A CLEANING SCHEDULE

Fill in details of all the items you clean

| Item | Frequency of cleaning | | | | | Precautions e.g. wear gloves or goggles | Method of cleaning |
|--------------|-----------------------|-------------|-------|--------|-------|--|--|
| | After use | Every shift | Daily | Weekly | Other | | |
| Work surface | X | | | | | Wear gloves | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Remove any obvious food and dirt. 2. Wash the surface with hot soapy water (detergent diluted according to manufacturer’s instructions) to remove grease and any other food and dirt. 3. Rinse with clean water to remove the detergent and loosened food and dirt. 4. Apply a disinfectant. Make sure you leave it on for the contact time recommended by the manufacturer. 5. Rinse with clean water to remove the disinfectant. 6. Leave to dry naturally or use a clean disposable cloth. |
| Fridge | | | | X | | Wear gloves | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Remove all food and store it in a cool place, ideally another fridge or cool box. 2. Remove shelves and compartments from the fridge and wash them in hot soapy water and then disinfect. Allow to dry naturally or use a clean or disposable cloth. 3. Wash and then disinfect all surfaces of fridge with hot soapy water and dry with a clean or disposable cloth. 4. Replace shelves and compartments, and put the food back in the fridge. 5. Wash and disinfect the outside including the handles and door seals. |



How clean are your cloths?

A recent cross regional sampling survey carried out by the Food Services team involved swabbing work surfaces and testing re-usable cleaning cloths. Results showed that use of a reusable cloth to wipe a surface after sanitising can increase the number of bacteria to unsatisfactory levels, highlighting the importance of changing cloths regularly and keeping them separate. Another concern identified was the need to fully dry cloths before placing them into storage to prevent any favourable conditions for bacterial growth.

Cleaning is a fundamental aspect of good food hygiene and in order to clean effectively food business operators must use the correct equipment. Both disposable and re-usable cloths are widely used in food businesses and if not used safely they can pose a serious cross-contamination risk. This risk has been recognised for many years particularly in those premises handling raw and ready to eat foods.

When cleaning with a dirty cloth, bacteria can easily be spread around the surfaces and equipment in the kitchen. Bacteria can also be transferred to apparently clean surfaces or to hands and then on to ready to eat foods that are being prepared. Such cross contamination has been identified as a contributing factor in 39% of foodborne poisoning outbreaks by a study into infectious disease outbreaks in England and Wales.

Cleaning cloths can provide an excellent environment for bacteria. Microscopic debris provides bacteria with a food source, which together with moisture and warmth allow the bacteria to multiply.

By using single use disposable cloths/paper towels many of these risks are all but eliminated, as a result they will always be recommended by our officers.

Advice for using cloths

- Use separate colour coded cloths for raw food and ready to eat food preparation areas.
- Always use new or freshly cleaned and disinfected cloths for cleaning work surfaces, equipment or utensils.
- Always keep an adequate supply of clean cloths in your kitchen.
- Wash and disinfect re-usable cloths after using them, especially in raw food preparation areas.
- Rinsing a cloth through with hot water is not sufficient to kill bacteria.
- Have a designated place in the kitchen for used or dirty cloths.
- Replace reusable cloths regularly. Old and damaged cloths become difficult to clean and disinfect. They may also shed fibres that can contaminate food.
- Train/remind staff about the importance of safe cleaning and preventing cross contamination. Make sure that everyone knows what cloth to use for different jobs.
- Disinfect cloths in boiling water or by using a hot wash cycle in a washing machine.
- Continuous soaking in a disinfectant solution is not an effective method. Inactivation of the disinfectant during use and failure to replace at the correct dilution/frequency can lead to contaminated cloths.

Hot food holding cabinets

During inspections the Food Services team have identified several instances where hot food holding cabinets are being used incorrectly, and have found food is being held for extensive periods in the microbiological danger zone (5°C to 63°C).

A common error being made is the use of these cabinets as an oven; in that cold and/or ambient temperature foods are being placed directly into the hot food holding cabinet.

Hot food holding cabinets: An overview

Hot holding is a legitimate and often indispensable stage in many high-volume food businesses, especially for businesses that experience intense peak service periods during certain hours of the day. Businesses can choose from a variety of units, including stationary, reach-in and roll-in rack or mobile cabinets, and upright and stackable models.



Hot food holding cabinets are designed to extend the amount of time foods can be kept warm, **after cooking**, prior to serving. The practice of preparing food in advance can free up cooking equipment to perform other tasks, allowing hot food holding equipment to increase speed of service and capacity. However, preparing food in advance is one of the most common causes of incidents of food poisoning. Consequently, the use of hot food holding cabinets must be adequately controlled.

Businesses must choose an appropriate type of cabinet to best suit their needs. Traditionally, hot food holding equipment employs three types of heating systems. Most units utilise convection heat, which consists of fans and blowers forcing air at different speeds. Cabinets using radiant heat feature a system built into the side walls and base of the cabinet and sometimes into the shelves. These models may utilise electrical elements, heated fluids or wires. The third type of heating system, controlled humidity, combines either radiant or convection heat with moist air. In many cases, the unit includes a water tank or Bain Marie, which creates moisture. A separate thermostat controls humidity so foods such as rotisserie chicken and barbecued items retain their moisture.

How to know when to replace a hot food holding cabinet

The operational life of a hot cabinet varies considerably. The average service life of a hot holding cabinet is between 5 and 20 years. The following points indicate when it is time to replace a hot food holding cabinet.

- **Cabinet deterioration:** Holes in the cabinet body can negatively affect the units operation, including its ability to hold temperature consistently.
- **Defective insulation:** Any compromise in the cabinet insulation can create a food safety issue.
- **Increased maintenance:** When maintenance becomes more frequent, especially for cabinets more than seven years old, the unit has likely reached the end of its service life.
- **Temperature recovery:** If an older hot food holding cabinet does not maintain holding temperatures at or above 63°C or takes longer to heat up, it is likely time to replace the unit.

Hot Food Holding Cabinet Usage

Hot food holding cabinets supplement food production and prolong food holding allowing other cooking equipment to be used. Food safety legislation requires hot food holding to maintain food temperatures at or above 63°C. It is important to schedule production of food that is to be held in the cabinet in line with sensible levels, hot holding cabinets should not be overloaded. Food Safety Management Systems must identify the usage of such equipment and the appropriate monitoring systems that the business has in place. Systems must include regular temperature checks to ensure that the cabinets are operating correctly.

Temperature checks should be made in the coolest part of the cabinet at least every two hours. At the end of the period of up to 2 hours, the food should be cooled as quickly as possible to a temperature of 8°C or below or discarded unless it is to be kept above 63 °C. A temperature check of the food should be made using a sanitised, calibrated hand-held digital temperature probe. The cabinet should only be used for the holding of those food types recommended by the manufacturer.

Maintaining a Hot Food Holding Cabinet Do's and Do Not's for optimum operational food safety

DO NOT use hot food cabinets as an oven to heat food.

DO make sure that all food is thoroughly cooked and temperature checked **BEFORE** placing in the cabinet.

DO monitor the temperature so that food is always being held at 63°C or above. (Maintain records of these temperature checks as part of your food safety management system).

DO ensure that your food safety management system covers all of the hazards and controls necessary for ensuring the safe use of hot food cabinets.

DO ensure that the hot food cabinet is effectively cleaned and sanitised and that these steps are included within the written cleaning schedule.

What's on your Christmas menu?



With the festive season upon us many people are already looking at Christmas menus in anticipation – but how much is their choice influenced by descriptions of food that may not be all they seem?

Food Services officers carry out checks to make sure restaurants do not mislead consumers with the claims and food descriptions on their menus.

On page 12 is a sample menu using commonly used claims and descriptions with a short explanation of the criteria that should be met for each item.

The No Nonsense Christmas Menu



STARTERS



Organic Broccoli and Stilton Soup

There are detailed standards within the Organic Products Regulations 2009 which must be adhered to before the description '**organic**' can be applied.

The name '**Stilton**' has legal protection, use is restricted to specific cheese. With Stilton and other cheese, such as 'Feta', products which meet the requirements of the Protected Designation of Origin (PDO) or Protected Geographical Indication (PGI) must be used. Food business operators should be aware of products which appear similar but cannot be described as such for example, 'Greek style cheese', may appear similar to 'Feta' but cannot be described as 'Feta'.

Homemade Chicken Liver Pate

The term '**homemade**' can only be used for products made at home, or made in a way that reflects a typical domestic kitchen, such as a pub kitchen. Dishes should be made from the basic ingredients in the premises from which they are sold. Claims like 'homemade style' are meaningless and should not be used.

Traditional Yorkshire Pudding with Gravy

The term '**traditional**' can only be used to describe a product that has existed for around 25 years or more. The ingredients and process used to make the product should have been available and substantially unchanged for that same period.

MAINS

Yorkshire Turkey Breast with Fresh Seasonal Vegetables

Yorkshire Turkey Breast would have to be from **Yorkshire**. It would be misleading to advertise a product which is from anywhere other than Yorkshire. Businesses should keep all invoices so they can substantiate any claims made.

Using the term '**seasonal**' can be misleading if it is applied to imported produce, or produce that has been grown in heated greenhouses outside of the natural season. Further to this, the description '**fresh**' must not be used where ingredients have been preserved, for example tinned, frozen or dried.

Roasted Vegetable Wellington with our Chefs Own Recipe Three Cheese Sauce

The vegetables must be '**roasted**', not flash roasted and the same principle also applies to meats. '**Our chefs own recipe**' indicates, not only that the product is homemade, but also an original recipe. A packet mix would not be acceptable for such a claim. Further to this FBO's would have to ensure three cheeses were used and that these met the criteria for cheese – analogue products would not be acceptable.

DESSERT

Traditional Christmas Pudding with Rum Sauce

Again the product should be made from a **traditional** recipe. The sauce would have to contain rum and not simply a rum flavouring. If a rum flavouring is used this should be described as '**rum flavour sauce**'.

Baileys Cheesecake with Fresh Double Cream

As the brand '**Baileys**' has been used, this product would have to be made with Baileys and not another Irish cream brand. Food business operators should be careful when using the description '**fresh cream**'. If a product is used which can be stored at ambient temperature before opening this is not '**fresh cream**'. UHT products and cream substitutes, which are often vegetable oil blends, cannot not be described as '**fresh cream**'.

Private water supplies and food businesses

A 'private water supply' is any water supply which is not provided by a water company. In the East Riding the water company is Yorkshire Water. If food businesses are using a private water supply it must be tested on a regular basis. Food businesses are legally bound to notify the council if they use a private water supply.



Only about 0.5% of the population in the East Riding use water from private supplies; usually in the more remote parts of the area. These supplies are mainly bore holes, but can be wells or natural springs. There are approximately 20 food businesses currently using a private water supply for food production purposes, including food factories, farms and some home caterers.

The Food Services team is responsible for conducting risk assessments and monitoring of all private water supplies in the East Riding. As a general rule the more people who consume the water, the more often and detailed the sampling and tests required. Naturally, the sampling frequency usually increases for premises that are producing food with their supply.

Requirements for food businesses using a private water supply

Businesses using water from a private supply for food production where a regular sampling programme has not yet been implemented should contact the Food Services team. Similarly, any business intending to install a private supply needs to be aware that it is a legal requirement for the supply to be sampled and risk assessed prior to it being used.



Potential problems with private water supplies

Private supplies can be contaminated by various bacteria or chemicals. If these are found in the water it indicates that the supply is being polluted somewhere between the source and tap. The water may have been polluted before it went into the supply source or pipe, or it could be polluted by sewage, animal or bird droppings.

The land where the source of a supply is situated can sometimes cause water to become contaminated with metals such as iron and manganese. Widespread use of fertilisers on the land may also cause the supply to be contaminated by nitrates.

Water with a high level of acidity can corrode copper and lead pipes also leading to contamination. Water could also be polluted by routine agricultural practices, such as spreading farm slurry which may then run off the land or through the soil into the source water. Septic tanks, manure heaps, drains, as well as animals having access to the supply can also cause pollution of the supply. All such risks need to be assessed and monitored by routine sampling in accordance with private water supply regulations.

Further information is available on the East Riding of Yorkshire Council's website at

<http://www2.eastriding.gov.uk/environment/food-safety-advice/private-drinking-water/>

Pest control in food businesses



Common pests found in food premises

The most common pests found in food premises are flies, ants, beetles, cockroaches, moths, rats and mice. All these pests present problems of possible contamination and disease and are usually found in places where hygiene and housekeeping has been neglected. Pests adapt to all sorts of conditions and can arise due to poor stock control, proofing problems and bad practice. Insects also cause a number of problems throughout their various life cycle stages and are sometimes hard to detect by the untrained eye. During the day some insects will hide away and feed at night. Rodents will exploit every opportunity whilst causing destruction and contamination of equipment and foodstuffs leaving urine, faecal matter and pathogenic bacteria along their trail.

What is a Pest control contract and why have one?

Food is needed by pests to survive. This means that food businesses are at constant risk of having pest problems. Therefore, it is good practice to employ the services of a reliable pest control contractor. A pest control contract provides food businesses with a professional service and comprehensive information about pest prevention and pest infestation.



Pest control contracts are usually tailored to suit the requirements of each business; meeting particular needs such as insect and rodent cover. A good pest control service provider will survey the premises and advise on proofing requirements to ensure that all possible access areas are secured against pest ingress. This could involve blocking entry points using fly screen products or the use of building materials around service pipe access. In some cases, simply proofing premises against pest ingress will provide a pest free environment and prevent any recurrence of pest activity. A regular monitoring programme will likely reinforce this.

Not only do regular visits from a competent professional pest technician provide advice and reassurance to a client but they also help the business to create a cleaner and safer environment to work in. Food hygiene legislation requires food businesses to have adequate procedures in place to control pests.

What about keeping pest control services in-house?

It is the responsibility of the food business operator to keep their premises pest free. Some food establishments tend to either have no proactive pest control measures in place or self-treat if they have a problem. However, this is not always the best or most appropriate approach to take, especially if an active infestation is discovered. Pest control officers are trained to identify where pests can enter buildings, to recognise signs of pest activity and to use the appropriate method of control, in particular the correct chemicals, whilst the improper use of pest control chemicals can be costly, dangerous and ineffective.

Employing pest control services

We recommend that you use a reputable pest control contractor such as the East Riding of Yorkshire Council pest control service, or similar, that is registered with the British Pest Control Association. These operators should offer early detection and treatment of pest activity including the avoidance of pest infestations whilst meeting current food and crop assured guidelines.

Contractors such as East Riding of Yorkshire Council pest control service can offer businesses a bespoke pest management programme involving regular, professional site visits which provide helpful advice and information to help businesses comply with the law and maintain a pest free environment. Typically, upon application, food businesses receive a free site survey to provide advice about what the service includes, if proofing works are required and if pest monitors should be installed at the premises. A copy of the survey findings should be left on site at each visit and a folder provided containing all the relevant information food businesses require in order to demonstrate compliance with the law.

East Riding of Yorkshire Council pest control service provides a professional, friendly and reliable team trained to industry standards to deal with pest issues in a range of businesses including farms, heavy industry, colleges, schools, residential homes to food businesses.

For more information and to arrange a site survey visit the website at

www.eastriding.gov.uk/pestcontrol or telephone 01482 396301.

Alternatively there are also several BPCA registered pest control contractors operating in the East Riding and readily available via a simple internet search.

**Best wishes for Christmas and the New Year
from the Food Services team.**