

*A newsletter for food business in the Colac Otway Shire*

# Allergen Awareness

For people with food allergies, consumption of food containing ingredients they are allergic to can be life threatening.

Avoiding foods containing allergens is the only way to prevent an allergic reaction.

This means it is vital for food businesses to be aware of allergens and know what is in their food.

## What is an allergy?

A food allergy is an immune system response to a food protein that the body mistakenly believes is harmful.

## What is anaphylaxis?

Anaphylaxis is the most severe form of an allergic reaction and is life threatening.

The most common causes of anaphylaxis are peanuts, tree nuts, eggs and cow's milk.

Anaphylaxis is now a notifiable incident and will be investigated.

## Requirements for food businesses

As a food business you are required to declare the most common ingredients known to cause allergic reactions that are in the food that you prepare and sell.

The Food Standards Code outlines these legislative requirements.

The code states that if any of the following ingredients are contained in food (whether as an ingredient, compound ingredient, food additive or processing aid) then they must be declared, no matter how small the amount:

- Crustaceans and their products (e.g. prawns, lobster)



**The most common causes of anaphylaxis are peanuts, tree nuts, eggs and cow's milk.**

- Peanuts and their products
- Soybeans and their products
- Tree nuts and their products (e.g. almonds, cashews)
- Sesame seeds and their products
- Fish and fish products
- Egg and egg products
- Milk and milk products
- Gluten and gluten containing cereals (e.g. wheat, rye, oats, barley and spelt)
- Lupin.



## Declaring allergens

Ingredients must be declared by:

- Checking all ingredient labels of food products used in the production of your food for the presence of these substances
- If you package or repackage food, you must list the presence of these substances in the ingredient list on the label
- Where food is not in a package and is displayed on the premises, the presence of allergens must be displayed on or near the food
- Where food is not in a package or consumed on the premises i.e. restaurant, the information must be provided to customers upon request, either verbally or in writing.

Source: [www.foodstandards.gov.au](http://www.foodstandards.gov.au)

# Allergen Management

- Ensure that all staff complete the National Allergy Strategy – All About Allergens for food service.

<https://foodallergytraining.org.au/>

- Provide a food allergen statement on all menus and encourage customers to speak to a member of staff if they have any dietary requirements or allergies before ordering.
- Complete and implement a food allergen matrix and have it displayed in a location where all kitchen and service staff can refer to it. The Food Allergy Training website features resources that can assist:

[https://foodallergytraining.org.au/pluginfile.php/79/mod\\_resource/content/3/Eat\\_easy\\_allergen\\_matrix.pdf](https://foodallergytraining.org.au/pluginfile.php/79/mod_resource/content/3/Eat_easy_allergen_matrix.pdf)

- If you're unsure, double check the ingredients with the chef, the customer and the food allergen matrix. Staff should never guess whether an ingredient is in a meal or not.
- Develop and implement a menu ordering system to clearly identify on the order docket what ingredient the customer is allergic to and, which dish has been ordered by that customer for entrée, main and dessert.
- Avoid cross contamination of food allergens. Always use a dedicated and separate food preparation area with separate equipment and utensils when preparing allergen free food.
- Handle food safely – ensure all staff wash their hands with warm, soapy water. Hands should be washed regularly; you should re-wash your hands before preparing food that must be free of a specific allergen.
- Clean and sanitise work surfaces, utensils and other food-contact items between food preparation. Even trace amounts of allergens can be harmful.
- Take customer requests about allergens seriously and listen carefully.



*In Victoria, all food premises are required to have a Food Act registration from their registering Council before selling food.*

## Streatrader reminder

**All food businesses and community groups who want to sell food at markets and events are required to register via Streatrader, an online registration system.**

(Please allow at least 21 days to process your initial registration).

### What is Streatrader?

In Victoria, all food premises are required to have a Food Act registration from their registering Council before selling food.

This includes fixed premises, such as cafes and restaurants – but also temporary and mobile food premises such as a market stall or a food van.

Streatrader is the online system for businesses and community groups to register their temporary and mobile food premises with their registering council.

Streatrader allows businesses and community groups to:

- Apply for a Food Act registration with their registering Council
- Manage their registration
- Lodge Statements of Trade for each of their events.

Streatrader is also the registration system for water cartage and vending machine businesses trading in Victoria.

Source: [www.streatrader.health.vic.gov.au](http://www.streatrader.health.vic.gov.au)



# Lodging a statement of trade online

We're in the middle of festival season so we'd like to remind those who are registered in Streatrader as a mobile or temporary food premises that you must submit a Statement of Trade (SOT) to each relevant Council within Victoria before trading at a public event in their municipality.

To lodge a SOT, you need to go to the Streatrader website, enter your login details and follow the prompts to add each individual event.

This will then be sent on to the relevant Council for approval.

Please note: Statements of Trade are required to be lodged at least one business day prior to the event.

You are not required to submit a SOT



for private catering such as parties and weddings.

Other laws may also apply to your trading. For example, you may need:

- permission from Council to operate on council land, or as a street trader, etc.
- permission from a land owner if you intend to operate on private land
- permission from an event organiser, if operating at events or markets
- other required licences – such as a liquor licence (if applicable).



## No smoking laws

**Under the Tobacco Act 1987, smoking is banned in outdoor dining areas.**

Examples of outdoor dining areas include footpath dining, courtyards, balconies, and beer gardens that form part of, or are attached to, cafes, restaurants, take-away outlets, pubs, licensed premises and other similar businesses.

Outdoor dining areas also include outdoor food courts provided for customers of multiple takeaway outlets.

Venues must display acceptable 'No smoking' signage to indicate smoke-free areas.

The signs must be displayed so customers can see a sign when entering, or within, the outdoor dining area.

There is strong community support for the ban of smoking in outdoor dining areas, which means most people voluntarily comply and expect others to do so.

An on-the-spot fine of \$330 may apply to the person in charge of the venue, if a venue is found to be in breach of the ban.

To access brochures, signage or more information:

- visit the tobacco reforms website [www.health.vic.gov.au/tobaccoreforms](http://www.health.vic.gov.au/tobaccoreforms)
- call the Tobacco Information Line on 1300 136 775.



*Temporary food premises have two options for hand washing facilities.*

## Handwashing requirements for temporary food premises

**Hand washing facilities are required to prepare or handle unpackaged food at a temporary food premises.**

Temporary food premises have two options for hand washing facilities; either permanent plumbed equipment or a sealed container with a tap valve.

All hand washing facilities are required to be supplied with liquid soap and single use paper towels.

Hand sanitisers may be used in addition to hand washing facilities but are not sufficient on their own unless a written exemption is provided by the Council for the event you are trading at.



**Council's Environmental Health Officers can issue an infringement notice.**

# The naughty corner

**Both the community and Council expect all food businesses to maintain the highest standards when it comes to protecting health by complying with the Food Act 1984.**

The Health Protection Unit has identified some common areas of non-compliance under the Food Act.

Please note, we will be ensuring common areas of non-compliance are being properly addressed during our next visit.

Common areas of non-compliance can include:

- Temperature control: failure to store food under 5 degrees or above 60 degrees Celsius
- Minimum records: minimum records not kept up to date or not available
- Handwashing: obstructions in access to handwashing facilities, failure to provide liquid soap and/or disposable paper towel
- Food storage: food stored uncovered or exposed to contamination.

Council's Environmental Health Officers can issue an infringement notice or take other actions for non-compliances under the Food Act 1984.

Reoccurring non-compliances under this legislation will see such actions come into effect.

# Have you paid your 2020 Food Act registration?

**Registration applications and payments are due before 31 December 2019.**

Please make sure you have renewed your registration.

All food premises are required to renew their registration every year with Council under the Food Act 1984.

It is an offence under the Food Act to operate un-registered.

The 2020 Renewal of Registration Application which sent out in November are due back with payment before 31 December 2019.

Please contact Council's Health Protection Unit on 5232 9400 if you haven't received your application.

Please note, an infringement notice may be issued if your application is returned passed the due date.

## New inspection report

**As a result of the Health Protection Unit moving to a digital system, inspection reports can now be sent to your email address.**

Please ensure Council has your most up to date contact information.

The inspection is still based on your premises compliance against the Food Act 1984.

That will not change, however there will be a change in how information will be presented to you.



## Food sampling

**Food sampling is necessary to maintain a high level of food safety in Victoria.**

**Under the Food Act 1984, each Victorian Council must submit a specified number of food samples for analysis each year.**

**Throughout the year, the Health Protection Unit will be collecting these food samples from a varied selection of food premises within Colac Otway Shire.**

## Contact us:

If you have any questions about this newsletter or any other food safety matter, please contact Council's Health Protection Unit.

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