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| Appendix 6A: Environmental cleaning and control measures – Instructions For Food Premises Proprietors |
| Guidelines for the investigation of gastroenteritis for Environmental Health Officers |

#### NOTE: A copy of Appendix 1A – Guidance for the dilution of chlorine-based solutions required for disinfection, should be provided with this document. Please use this to assist you with dilutions.

The following is a guide to the steps that need to be followed to ensure that the cleaning and control measures implemented during an investigation are effective. Your council Environmental Health Officer (EHO) will be supervising the following to ensure it is completed in accordance with the guidelines.

## 1. Environmental cleaning and sanitising

Cleaning and sanitising should be done as separate processes. A surface needs to be thoroughly cleaned (with detergent) before it is sanitised, as sanitisers generally do not work well in the presence of food residues.

The cleaning of surfaces (in food handling areas and food contact surfaces) should be undertaken as follows:

* Wash: use hot water and detergent to removal grease and food residue;
* Rinse: rinse off detergent and any loosened residue;
* Sanitise: follow the instructions for sanitising (using chemicals, hot water or dishwasher) in the table below;
* Rinse: wash of the sanitiser, if using bleach or a chemical sanitiser (refer to manufacturer’s instructions;
* Dry: allow to air dry or use single use towels.

### Kitchen and food handling areas (including all serving areas and bars):

* **All kitchen and food handling areas** need to be sanitised with a solution of 1000 parts per million (ppm) of available chlorine with a contact time of 10 minutes (see chlorine dilutions in appendix 1). This clean-up needs to include all work surfaces, benches, shelving, doors, sinks, floors etc., or any other areas that are possibly contaminated.
* **All kitchen food contact surfaces** (such as utensils, equipment, crockery and cutlery) are to be sanitised in one of the following ways:

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| Sanitising method | Procedure to be followed |

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| Soak items in hot water | At a minimum of 77°C for at least 30 seconds[[1]](#endnote-1) |
| Commercial dishwasher | Water temperature in rinse cycle needs to be greater than 80°C1 |
| Domestic dishwasher | Use hottest and longest cycle (e.g. heavy duty cycle, 55°C or above)1 |
| Sanitising by hand using a chemical sanitiser | Soak items in 100 ppm of available chlorine for at least 3 minutes at a minimum water temperature of 50°C |
| Equipment that cannot be completely soaked in water | 200 ppm of available chlorine should be used on all surfaces for 10 minutes |
| ***It is important that all food processing equipment (blenders, mixers, stab mixers, etc.) be dismantled enough to be thoroughly cleaned and sanitised. Equipment parts may need to be washed and scrubbed clean before a sanitiser can be applied or before the parts are placed into a dishwasher.*** | |

### Other areas

All toilets and bathrooms areas, (including toilet bowls, hand wash basins, tap handles, doors, door handles, toilet flush buttons/handles, floors), all communal areas (staff rooms, dining rooms, etc.) and frequently touched surfaces that may have been contaminated, should be **cleaned and sanitised with a solution of 1000ppm of available chlorine.**

### Cleaning vomit or faeces

If a faecal accident or vomiting has occurred all surrounding surfaces need to be cleaned and sanitised with 1000ppm of available chlorine. **Vomit** can produce aerosols, (a fine mist of virus particles) suspended in the air and fall onto food or surfaces. If a person vomits in a public area, all people should be removed from the vicinity and the area cleaned immediately. Persons cleaning vomit or faeces should wear gloves, apron and a mask. Paper towels should be used to soak up excess vomit and disposed of into a sealed waste bag. The area can then be cleaned and sanitised. **Any uncovered food in the immediate area must be discarded.**

#### Carpets

All **carpets** contaminated by vomit and/or faeces are be cleaned with detergent and hot water and then **steam cleaned**, as high temperature and moisture are required to kill viruses. All surface soiling must be thoroughly cleaned first. True steam cleaners release steam under pressure, which ensures that the temperature is above 100°C and the carpet dries quickly.

### Cleaning equipment

Ensure, where possible, that cleaning equipment such as cloths, mops and brushes are disposable and discarded immediately after use. If this cannot be done, cleaning equipment will need to be disinfected with 1000ppm of available chlorine.

## 2. Food safety

**No food should be prepared or served** from the kitchen until an EHO supervised clean-up has been conducted.

Ensure that any suspect food or drink is not served but do not discard it. Ensure that it is kept in a suitable place (e.g. storeroom/fridge) and labelled with **“do not use”**, so it cannot be served by mistake, until it has been collected for sampling by the council EHO.

### Food handling staff

If any food handling staff have been ill with gastrointestinal symptoms (this includes all kitchen staff, waiting staff, serving/bar staff, etc) and ensure that they are sent home and do not return to work (or go to work in another food premises) until 48 hours after their symptoms have stopped.

## 3. Closure of premises

It is very difficult to clean and sanitise all areas in a premises if the premises is still open for business and preparing food. Proprietors will need to consider **closing the premises** until an effective clean-up has been completed in accordance with these guidelines.

## 4. Declaring an outbreak investigation over

Although cases may have ceased and the premises may or may not be open for business, the investigation of the outbreak may not be over. If the investigation is still continuing the council EHO may still be required to visit the premises to collect further information to assist the investigation. The department may also be analysing information and awaiting laboratory results of samples and specimens to inform the outbreak. Your council EHO will advise you of when the outbreak investigation has been completed.

1. Safe Food Australia, Appendix 6: Cleaning and sanitising surfaces and utensils <http://www.foodstandards.gov.au/publications/pages/safefoodaustralia3rd16.aspx> [↑](#endnote-ref-1)