

# Gloucester City Council

## *Environmental Health Factsheet*

### HOME CATERING

Many of us use our own kitchen occasionally to prepare food for larger-than-usual numbers of people, eg for parties, fund-raising functions and even for wedding receptions. The average home kitchen is not really designed or equipped for this kind of use. So great care needs to be taken with cooking, storing, transporting and serving food for these occasions. This simple **Factsheet** covers basic rules you should follow to avoid the risk of illness from food prepared in **your** kitchen. If you run a **catering business** from home you must register with the local authority and comply with **Food Hygiene Regulations**. You should seek further information and advice from the Environmental Services Department and consider attending a food hygiene training course.

- \* Thoroughly clean all utensils, equipment and working surfaces before and after food preparation
  - Use an un-scented anti-bacterial cleaner (eg 'Dettol') **after** washing-down worktops etc
  - Don't allow pets onto worktops or in contact with food
  - Wash Your Hands before preparing food and after using the toilet or handling raw food or rubbish
  
- \* Keep Raw and Cooked foods apart to prevent **cross contamination**
  - Use separate utensils, cutting boards and worktops or clean **thoroughly** after use with raw food
  - Place cooked food **above** raw food in the fridge
  
- \* Avoid recipes that use uncooked or lightly cooked eggs
  - Mousses, soufflés and uncooked cheesecake
  - Other desserts and home-made ice cream
  - Home-made mayonnaise and other sauces

**never** use raw egg as a binder for sandwich fillings



#### ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH

---

Gloucester City Council    Tel 01452 396396    Fax 01452 396340  
Herbert Warehouse        Email [enviro@gloucester.gov.uk](mailto:enviro@gloucester.gov.uk)  
The Docks                    Minicom 01452 396161  
Gloucester GL1 2EQ        [www.gloucester.gov.uk](http://www.gloucester.gov.uk)



**GLOUCESTER**  
**CITY COUNCIL**

- \* Keep fridges and freezers clean and regularly defrosted; check operating temperatures daily
  - Fridges 5°C or less
  - Freezers -18°C or below

Don't overload your fridge; let hot food cool for not more than 1½ hours before putting it into the fridge

### **Check that you have enough fridge space for the food you are making**

- \* Cook food thoroughly
  - The centre must be piping hot
  - **Never** re-heat food more than once
  - Follow microwave cooking instructions carefully; remember the 'standing time' after cooking
- \* Transport food carefully
  - Always wrapped or covered
  - Keep food cool; use insulated boxes
  - **Never** leave food in a car or boot in hot weather
- \* Serving food
  - Hot food **must** be **really** hot
  - Cold food **must** be kept cool; **don't** set up the buffet too long before the function
  - Any food left after 4 hours out of the fridge should be thrown away

### **BACKGROUND NOTES**

The main objective of the advice given in this **Factsheet** is to prevent **food poisoning**. Germs such as Salmonella and Campylobacter (which is now the commonest cause of diarrhoea in the UK) may be present in raw meat/poultry and fresh eggs. Others, including virus infections can be found in raw vegetables, salads and shellfish. Many of these can **multiply** in food at normal room temperatures and some are able to resist cooking. To minimise the risk of **food poisoning** avoid 'cross-contamination'; **always** cook food thoroughly and, if it is not to be eaten straightaway, **either** keep it **hot** or cool it quickly and store under refrigeration. **Remember** that some germs can also be carried on your skin and in the mouth, nose and throat. **Wash hands thoroughly** before handling food.

### **FOR FURTHER READING**

Ask for the **Foodsense** booklets

- Healthy Eating
- Food Safety
- Keeping Food Cool and Safe
- The New Microwave Labels
- 'Best Before' and 'Use-By' Dates