

# Food & Safety Update

Borough Council of  
King's Lynn &  
West Norfolk



## WATCH OUT THE EASTER BUNNY IS ABOUT!

Please take a moment to read our latest update & share it with your team. We hope these updates serve as useful reminders.

We will review common issues identified during our inspections & provide tips on complying with legislation & maintaining or improving your food hygiene rating.

Both food and health and safety issues will be included; and in each issue we will have a 'Focus Point.'

Use these updates for team discussions & refresher training.



### April Content

- Understanding your Structural Responsibilities as a Food Business
- Anglian Water – Just Bin it Campaign
- Thinking about Growing Your Business?
- Cleaning is Everyone's Responsibility
- Don't Let it Be you
- Reputable suppliers
- Deliveries out of Hours
- Health & Safety Risk Assessment
- Stress in the Workplace
- Electrical Safety



### Focus Point: Cleaning Beneath and Behind Surfaces

- **DO** clean under your racking and work surfaces daily
- **DO** pull out equipment/worksurfaces in difficult to reach areas weekly
- **DO NOT** leave it to someone else to clear your mess.
- **DO** clean as you go!
- **DO NOT** ignore what you're seeing.



## Understanding Your Structural Responsibilities as a Food Business

We know many of you operate from older buildings, but regardless of the age or condition of the premises, you still have a legal duty to comply with food hygiene regulations.

If you rent your premises, it's important to check your lease carefully. Many operators are surprised to discover that, even as tenants, they are responsible for aspects of the internal structure.

When we talk about "structure" during an inspection, we're not just referring to the kitchen. It includes all areas where food, drink, packaging, or other consumables are stored, for example:

- Bars
- Cellars
- Stock rooms
- Dry stores
- Any other food-related storage areas

The hygiene regulations outline the minimum structural standards you must meet, but they don't prescribe how you achieve them. As many of you know, structural compliance is also one of the elements that contributes to your food hygiene rating.

Before you commit significant funds to repairs or improvements, why not seek some guidance from the food team? You can contact us at [food.safety@west-norfolk.gov.uk](mailto:food.safety@west-norfolk.gov.uk)

While the final decision rests with you as the business operator, we can talk you through different options and highlight the pros and cons of each.

Your budget is your choice—but a quick conversation with us may help you make a more informed and cost-effective decision.



## Thinking About Growing Your Business?

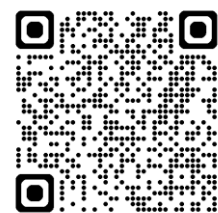
If you're considering expanding to new locations or simply strengthening the business you already have, it may be worth contacting the New Anglia Growth Hub. They support small businesses across the county, offering free, fully funded, and impartial advice.

Their team of experienced advisers can help you:

- Build and expand your professional network
- Identify and access relevant business grants
- Strengthen your digital capabilities
- Understand how to protect your intellectual property, including trademarks for your business name or logo

If you have questions about food safety or health and safety, you can still contact the food team at [food.safety@west-norfolk.gov.uk](mailto:food.safety@west-norfolk.gov.uk). However, the New Anglia Growth Hub is an excellent additional resource for broader business development support.

You can find more information about their services on their website: Norfolk and Suffolk business support. If you'd like to get in touch, simply use the QR code provided.



## Managing Deliveries Outside Normal Working Hours

Deliveries can arrive at any time, and in some cases, goods may be dropped off before staff are on site. To keep food safe and secure, it's important to plan how these early deliveries will be handled.

### Adjusting Delivery Times

If you do not have a secure area for unattended deliveries, speak with your suppliers to see whether delivery times can be rescheduled to when staff are present.

### Providing a Secure Delivery Storage Unit

Some businesses choose to install a secure food storage unit that delivery drivers can access using a key safe.

- This can be a practical option when early deliveries are unavoidable.



- If chilled or frozen foods are being delivered, you must ensure the driver has access to appropriate refrigeration or freezer equipment to maintain food safety.

**Allowing Access to the Premises**

In some cases, businesses provide delivery drivers with a back-door key so they can place goods directly into the kitchen.

- You may choose to allocate a specific fridge for drivers to use when storing chilled items.
- If you adopt this approach, ensure you have robust procedures in place to maintain security and food safety.



**Do not leave your goods outside, unprotected and open to the elements.**

## Choosing Reputable Suppliers

*If it sounds too good to be true, it probably is.*

Selecting reliable suppliers is essential for protecting your business, your customers, and your reputation. Although the process can take time, using a structured approach makes it far easier. When assessing potential suppliers, consider the following:

**Registration & Compliance**

- Check whether the supplier is registered with their local authority.
- If they sell directly to the public, you may be able to view their food hygiene rating via the Food Hygiene Ratings scheme.
- Confirm whether they are part of any recognised third-party certification or quality assurance schemes. Certified businesses should be able to provide documentation on request.

**Documentation & Traceability**

- Ensure they provide invoices and receipts—these are essential for traceability.

- Ask how they store, transport, and pack their goods. They should be able to demonstrate their procedures and show that they can trace products one step back and one step forward.

**Allergen Management**

- A reputable supplier must provide accurate allergen information for every product.
- Ask how often they review and update product information, and how they will communicate changes to you.

**Customer Service & Communication**

- Consider how easy they are to contact and how responsive they are. Good communication is vital for a smooth working relationship.

**Financial Stability**

- A supplier who suddenly goes out of business can leave you without essential ingredients at critical times. Assess their stability where possible.

**Returns & Shelf Life**

- Be clear on their returns policy.
- What happens if goods arrive past their use-by date or with an unexpectedly short shelf life?

**Temperature Control for Chilled/Frozen Goods**

- Suppliers of chilled or frozen foods must legally maintain the cold chain.
- Check that they have the resources to deliver food at 8°C or below.
- Their vehicles should be able to record and evidence holding temperatures.

**Your Legal Responsibility**

You are required by law to take reasonable precautions to protect your customers. Choosing reputable suppliers is a key part of meeting that obligation.





## Tackling Blockages: Working Together to Reduce FOG and Keep Our Sewers Flowing

Between April 2024 and March 2025, Anglian Water cleared more than 35,000 sewer blockages. Around 80% of these were caused by the wrong items being flushed, while the



remainder resulted from the build-up of Fats, Oils and Grease (FOG) being poured down sinks and drains.

To address this growing issue, Anglian Water is taking a more proactive approach with both domestic and commercial customers. As part of this, they have partnered with ECAS (Environmental & Compliance Services) to work directly with food businesses to prevent FOG entering the sewer network. Their long-term aim is to ensure that appropriate grease management equipment, such as grease traps, is installed and properly maintained.

If your business already has a grease trap in place, you're ahead of the curve—many businesses still don't. However, the expectations are changing. In the future, businesses that refuse to engage with Anglian Water and are later found to be responsible for a blockage may face prosecution and be required to cover the full cost of clearance.

By working together now, businesses can avoid disruption, protect the environment, and stay compliant with emerging requirements.

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## Don't Let It Be You

A food business operator in Luton was recently fined after serious food hygiene offences were uncovered at two of their premises.

Both sites were immediately closed using Emergency Hygiene Prohibition Notices when inspectors discovered a mouse infestation. Hygiene standards were extremely poor:

- Dirt and food debris had built up on floors, equipment, and surfaces
- Mouse droppings were found inside food storage crates
- Neither site had received recent pest control visits

As a result, the business received:

- £18,000 fine, plus £140 costs and a £2,000 victim surcharge
- The Director was fined £640, ordered to pay £140 costs, and a £256 victim surcharge

This case highlights how quickly poor standards—and a lack of pest control—can lead to serious legal and financial consequences.

## Keeping Pests Out: Your Responsibilities

Effective pest control is essential to prevent contamination and protect your customers. Make sure you:

### Check Your Premises Regularly

- Look for signs of pests such as droppings, gnaw marks, nesting materials, or unusual smells.
- If you find evidence of pests, contact a professional pest controller immediately.
- Dispose of any affected food and thoroughly clean and disinfect the area.

### Inspect Deliveries

- Check incoming goods for damage, contamination, or signs of pests.
- If you have concerns, speak to your supplier about the systems they have in place to prevent pest issues.

### Maintain External Areas

- Keep outdoor spaces, including food storerooms and bin areas, clean and tidy.
- Ensure bin lids are kept closed to avoid attracting pests.





# HEALTH & SAFETY

You may not see health and safety officers routinely, but they are still around. Are you aware that both you and your employer have duties under the Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974?

## Electrical Safety for Outdoor Areas

If you've extended your venue by making use of outdoor space—adding lighting, heating, speakers, or extra dining areas—now is the perfect time to ensure everything is safe and compliant before customers return.

Legislation requires that any electrical equipment with the potential to cause injury must be maintained in a safe condition. Outdoor electrical items must be specifically designed for outdoor use and should carry a CE or UKCA mark.

### Before Installing Outdoor Electrical Equipment

Whether the equipment is new or reused, make sure it is safe and suitable. Consider the following:

1. Is the equipment designed for outdoor use?
2. Indoor equipment is not weather-resistant and can pose a serious risk.
3. Is the equipment damaged?
4. Look for frayed cables, cracked casings, exposed wiring, or signs of overheating.
5. Is it in good condition and compatible with other equipment?
6. Mismatched or overloaded equipment increases the risk of electrical faults.
7. Will it be connected to a socket protected by an RCD (Residual Current Device)?
8. RCDs reduce the risk of electric shock by cutting power quickly if a fault occurs.
9. Are all sockets in good condition and weatherproof?

10. Outdoor sockets must be fully sealed and designed to withstand rain and moisture.
11. Are sockets positioned safely? They should be out of reach of customers and protected from accidental damage.



### When Installing or Using Outdoor Electrical Equipment

To keep your outdoor areas safe:

- Place equipment where it won't be damaged and keep it away from flammable materials.
- Check equipment regularly for signs of wear, damage, or water ingress.
- Buy from reputable suppliers to ensure equipment meets safety standards.
- Keep manufacturer instructions and packaging for future reference, maintenance, or storage.
- Store equipment correctly—avoid damp or excessively hot environments that can cause deterioration.

## Manual Handling Risk Assessment: Preventing Manual Handling Injuries to Catering Staff

Manual handling includes lifting, lowering, carrying, pushing, and pulling any load. It accounts for over one-third of all workplace injuries, including damage to the back, arms, legs, joints, & injuries caused by repetitive strain.



Under the Manual Handling Operations Regulations and Health and Safety at Work etc. Act, both employers and employees have legal duties. If manual handling cannot be avoided, risk assessments must be carried out to identify hazards and introduce appropriate control measures.



## Employer Responsibilities

### 1. Engage with Staff

Talking to staff is often the key to success. Employees understand the day-to-day tasks that involve manual handling and may already have practical ideas for reducing loads or improving processes.

### 2. Prioritise Prevention

Preventative measures are cost-effective in the long term, reducing injuries, lost time, and staff turnover.

### 3. Provide Training

All staff must be trained in:  
Safe lifting and handling techniques and the correct use of any mechanical aids or equipment provided

## Employee Responsibilities

Employees must:

- Take reasonable care of their own health and safety and that of colleagues
- Use equipment provided and follow safe working practices
- Co-operate with their employer to ensure safe systems of work

## Reducing Manual Handling Risks

Where manual handling cannot be avoided, consider improvements to the workplace environment and the use of mechanical aids. Examples include:

- Fitting heavy equipment with

lockable castors to make cleaning easier

- Ordering stock in smaller bags (e.g., reducing from 25 kg to 16 kg)
- Breaking loads down when storing or moving stock
- Using smaller bins or changing bags more frequently to reduce load weight
- Storing heavy items at waist height to minimise bending and reaching
- Adjusting work surface heights to reduce awkward postures

## Considering Individual Capability

It is not acceptable to assume that only one sex should carry out lifting tasks. Assess the capability of all individuals, taking into account:

- Age and physical size
- Existing health conditions
- Pregnancy
- Weight of the load and time pressures associated with the task

## Training and Supervision

Ensure all staff are adequately trained and supervised, especially:

- New recruits
- Trainees
- Young workers, who may be more prone to incidents due to inexperience or eagerness
- Staff changing roles or taking on new responsibilities

## FURTHER INFORMATION

The Health and Safety Executive (HSE) provides detailed guidance on manual handling. Staff can access this by scanning the QR code provided.

