

## **A GUIDE TO HYGIENE AND SAFETY STANDARDS FOR MOBILE FOOD BUSINESSES**

The information in this guidance is intended to provide assistance for any person wishing to operate a food business from a mobile vehicle, trailer or temporary food stall. They include hot dog vendors, burger stalls, ice-cream vans, fish and chip vans and any other hot or cold food products, usually intended for immediate consumption. It is not a complete guide to the law; however, applying the guidance will help you to comply with the legislation.

### **FOOD PREMISES REGISTRATION**

Before you start to operate your food business you must register with the Local Authority where the van, trailer or stall is ordinarily kept or returns to between trading, sometimes called the 'Registering Authority'. The application should be made 28 days before you intend to start trading. Registration is free.

Where a mobile caterer trades outside their Registering Authority area, the Environmental Health Service in the Council area you are trading may consult the Registering Authority.

### **FOOD HYGIENE RATING SCHEME**

Under Section 7 of Food Hygiene Rating Act (Northern Ireland) 2016, you should display a valid rating sticker at or near each public entrance or at your stall. You must display the rating where it can be readily seen and easily read by customers.

Food Hygiene Ratings are issued by the Council in which your business is registered.

Due to the nature of your business you will be subject to regular food hygiene and or food standards inspections by other Environmental Health Departments when trading in their area. Should any breaches of food hygiene legislation be noted when trading; other councils will notify the registering Council of such findings. This will result in a review of your current Food Hygiene Rating. You should be aware that your FHRS may be reduced should evidence show a drop in the standards of your food business.

## ALLERGEN CONTROL

The EU law has listed 14 allergens that need to be identified if they are used as ingredients in a dish. As a food business serving loose foods, you will have to supply information for every item on your menu that contains any of the 14 allergens if requested. Allergen information should be easily accessible, in a conspicuous place, easily visible and clearly legible. This can be in a number of ways:

- Menu
- Chalkboard
- Signposting to where information may be obtained (**an allergen sign has been enclosed**)
- Information leaflet

## NATASHA'S LAW

Natasha's Law came into effect on 1st October 2021. It requires all food outlets to provide full ingredient lists with clear allergen labelling on Pre Packed for Direct Sale foods (PPDS). PPDS is food that is prepared, prepacked and offered or sold to consumers on the same premises.. According to the new rules, PPDS (Prepacked for Direct Sale) food will have to clearly display the following information on the packaging:

- Name of the food
- Full ingredients list, with allergenic ingredients emphasised (for example in bold, italics or a different colour)

For further details, please go to <https://www.food.gov.uk/business-guidance/introduction-to-allergen-labelling-changes-ppds>

## **FOOD HYGIENE MATTERS**

### **The Food Hygiene (Northern Ireland) Regulations 2006 Regulation (EC) No. 852/2004**

#### **1. HACCP / FOOD SAFETY MANAGEMENT**

HACCP stands for 'Hazard Analysis Critical Control Point'. It is an internationally recognised and recommended system of food safety management. It focuses on identifying the 'critical points' in a process where food safety problems (or 'hazards') could arise and putting steps in place to prevent things going wrong. This is sometimes referred to as 'controlling hazards'. Keeping records is an important part of HACCP systems. You are also required to provide some simple written evidence of your procedures to ensure food safety have been thought through carefully and are being properly applied.

To assist you in complying with the requirements of HACCP the Food Standards Agency has developed a number of generic models which are tailored towards your type of business including, Safer Food Better Business and Safe Catering. These models are practical and easy to use and will assist you in the following:

- comply with the hygiene regulations
- show what you need to do to make food safely
- train staff
- protect your business's reputation
- improve your business e.g. by wasting less food.

You can download a pack on-line by visiting [www.food.gov.uk](http://www.food.gov.uk).

**You must keep a copy of your HACCP available for inspection at all times.**

#### **2. TEMPERATURE CONTROL**

Effective temperature control and storage is one of the most important safeguards for controlling the growth of food poisoning organisms.



#### **Cooking / reheating**

To kill food poisoning bacteria such as *E. coli*, food must be thoroughly reheated and/or cooked. This means ensuring you achieve a minimum temperature at the centre of the food of 75°C. The temperature of food can be checked using a probe thermometer. You

must be able to demonstrate an effective way of disinfecting your probe thermometers, e.g. sanitising probe wipes, and ensure it is calibrated on a regular basis.

If you are cooking burgers, sausages, chicken etc. you must ensure they are fully cooked before they are sold. You can also ensure this type of food is cooked by cutting into the centre and making sure the juices run clear and the meat appears cooked. You must ensure there is no pink/red meat in the centre of the chicken.

## **Refrigeration**

Sufficient refrigerated storage is required if you are selling any high risk foods. High risk foods include: cold cooked meats, fish products, cold cooked vegetable dishes, any cold cooked dish containing egg or cheese, prepared salads and dressings, soft cheeses, sandwiches which contain any of the above, low acid desserts and cream products, fresh pasta, and smoked or cured meats which are not ambient stable.

These high risk foods must be held at or below 8°C, preferably between 0°C – 3°C. If a gauge on a chilled unit is used this must reflect product temperature. Chilled ready to eat foods can be kept at an ambient temperature for one 4 hour period only. At the end of this period the food must be disposed of or kept chilled below 8°C until sold. If you intend to make use of this exemption you must be able to provide evidence to the inspecting officer that the time period has not been exceeded. It is recommended that freezers should operate at -18°C or below.

Food should be transported using food grade containers with lids. To maintain the temperature of food during transit insulated boxes containing frozen ice packs may be adequate for a short period of time.

## **Hot holding**

If you intend to hot hold food for more than 2 hours, e.g. sauces, burgers etc. then it must be held above 63°C and regular checks undertaken to ensure this temperature is achieved. Foods being hot held can go out of temperature control for one 2 hour period. At the end of this period the food must be returned to a temperature above 63°C or disposed of. If you intend to make use of this exemption you must be able to provide evidence to the inspecting officer that the time period has not been exceeded.

You must have any relevant records available for inspection at all times.

## **3. DELIVERIES**

Routine checks must be made periodically on deliveries of food. High risk food must be transported, stored and displayed at a temperature of 8°C or below. You must check 'use by' dates of foods that have them. You must not accept foods past their 'use by'

date. Perishable foods should only be used with enough 'shelf life' to enable you to sell them. It is not good practice to use/sell food past its 'best before' date.



#### 4. TRAINING

All food handlers are to be supervised and instructed and/or trained in food hygiene matters appropriate to their work activity. Food handlers must be trained to a level that is commensurate with the type of food handling work that they are expected to undertake. There is no legal requirement to attend a formal training course or get a qualification, although many businesses may want their staff to do so. The necessary skills may also be obtained in other ways, such as through on-the-job training, self-study or relevant prior experience. Those responsible for developing and maintaining the business's food safety procedures, based on HACCP principles, must also have received adequate training.

#### 5. STRUCTURAL REQUIREMENTS

The unit must be large enough for the type of operation carried out e.g. sufficient working surfaces for the separate preparation of raw and cooked products, so that cross contamination cannot occur. The unit must be proofed against pests (e.g. flies and vermin) as far as reasonably practicable.

All internal surfaces must be constructed of washable materials and be easy to clean e.g. vinyl floor tiles or continuous floor covering, plastic/laminate cladding for walls and ceiling. Tables, working surfaces, shelves, food display cabinets, counters, equipment utensils and display containers must be easy to clean and in good repair. Particular attention must be paid to ensuring the edges of shelves and wood surfaces are sealed to allow effective cleaning. Any surface that food comes into contact with must be capable of being disinfected. Suitable materials for food contact surfaces include stainless steel, ceramics or food grade plastics.

Regular inspections are essential to identify structural defects or broken equipment and to arrange for remedial action. If you use your unit on an occasional basis you must check it prior to use after periods of non-use and storage. Personal belongings must not be kept in food preparation areas, lockers or cupboards should be provided.

An adequate supply of natural or artificial lighting must be available to all parts of the unit and must be good enough to facilitate safe food handling, cleaning and inspection.

There must be suitable and sufficient means of natural or mechanical ventilation. Adequate ventilation must be provided to ensure that heat or humidity do not build up to levels that could compromise food safety, and to avoid condensation. It is recommended that this is in the form of a canopy, connected to a flue with a mechanical extract fan, filters and grease trap, above any cooking or frying range.

## 6. CLEANING

The unit must be kept clean and maintained in a good state of repair, with surfaces that are free from cracks, splits, chips or flaking decoration to enable effective cleaning to be carried out.

There should be an adequate supply of approved disinfectant/sanitising products for the regular disinfection of equipment and work surfaces. The disinfectant/sanitising products should meet the following standard BS EN 1276:2009, BS EN 1276:1997 or equivalent. Check the label of the product or confirm this with your supplier.

Separate cloths must be used for cleaning raw and ready to eat areas, utensils and equipment. The cloths should be colour coded or disposable.

When cleaning surfaces or equipment the area should be washed clean and then a disinfectant applied and rinsed. If you use a sanitising chemical then this must be applied twice to adequately disinfect the area or equipment.

## 7. CROSS CONTAMINATION

The following principles of cross contamination should be observed to prevent the spread of food poisoning bacteria:

- Raw and cooked/ready to eat food must always be kept separate during storage and preparation. Store cooked/ready to eat food above any raw foods.
- You should designate a “Clean Area” within your premise where only ready to eat foods are prepared. Raw food should never enter this area.
- Use a separate work surface to prepare raw meat or ensure adequate cleaning and disinfection of work surfaces between uses.
- Store food off the ground and protected from rain, dust, birds and animals.
- Handle cooked food as little as possible, use tongs where appropriate.
- Ensure you use different equipment and containers for the preparation, handling or storage of raw and cooked/ready to eat food unless they are heat disinfected using a dishwasher.
- Clean and disinfect sinks after washing/preparing vegetables and raw food.
- Protection from public coughing or sneezing over food by providing a ‘sneeze screen’.

- Designing/sitting displays or display equipment to avoid customers/staff reaching over food.
- You must not allow food to be contaminated by pests including insects, rats, mice and birds.
- Complex equipment must never be used for raw and ready to eat foods, e.g. vacuum packers, meat slicers, mincers.

## **8. PERSONAL HYGIENE**

Every person working in a food handling area must maintain a high degree of personal cleanliness. This applies to 'every person' working in a food handling area whether or not they handle food. The Food Business Operator must ensure all staff observe good personal hygiene and refrain from unhygienic habits and practices which may expose food to the risk of contamination.

The following will fulfil the requirements:

- Washing hands regularly, particularly after going to the toilet, after handling raw food, after handling rubbish, before starting work, on returning to work, after sneezing/coughing, after having a break (including smoke breaks), and after handling dirty packaging.
- Not smoking, eating, drinking or chewing gum where open food is handled.
- Covering any spots, skin cuts and abrasions (on exposed areas such as hands or lower arms) with waterproof dressings.
- Not wearing jewellery, nail varnish or false nails which may present a risk of contamination. As well as physically contaminating food itself, jewellery can harbour dirt and bacteria.
- Ensure food handlers must wear clean protective over clothing whilst handling unwrapped food.
- It is also recommended that staff with long hair wear a hair net.

Waterproof plasters should be provided in the First Aid Kit and preferably coloured blue.

## **9. HAND WASHING FACILITIES**

All food businesses handling open high risk foods must have access to a wash hand basin or bowl for the hygienic cleaning and drying of hands. The hand washing facilities must be separate from any facilities provided for the washing of equipment or food. Hot and cold water, a supply of soap or detergent and hygienic hand drying facilities must be maintained at the washbasin. It is recommended that liquid anti-bacterial soap and disposable paper towels are used.



Where only low risk open foods are for sale (i.e. pre-wrapped, tinned or bottled goods, open dry goods such as sweets, nuts, cereals and plain bread products and whole fruit and vegetables, biscuits, olives etc.) and utensils are used for handling the food; or where the food is fully wrapped antiseptic wipes and/or disposable gloves/communal facilities may be acceptable alternatives. EHO's will judge each case individually.

## 10. SINKS

Adequate facilities must be provided for the cleaning and disinfecting of equipment and for washing food. Ideally a double sink unit for washing and rinsing should be used with a constant supply of hot and cold water. In most operations one sink is acceptable for both equipment and food washing, provided that both activities can be carried out effectively and without prejudice to food safety. It will be necessary to clean and disinfect the sink between uses in particular in circumstances where root vegetables have been cleaned.

In circumstances where there is greater volume of preparation work and equipment and food washing, separate sinks must be provided. This is also the case where it is impracticable to clean and disinfect a single facility between uses.

## 11. WATER SUPPLY

There must be an adequate supply of potable water available to ensure foodstuffs are not contaminated and must be used for; cleaning food, food contact surfaces, cleaning hands, cooking food, as an ingredient in food and drinks and any other operations where there is a risk of contaminating foodstuffs. If mains supply is not available then food businesses may use containers of water which can be filled from the mains supply, water tanks/bowsers, or a private water supply. Where containers of water are used they must be:

- made of food grade materials and be enclosed
- kept clean and disinfected frequently to avoid the risk of contamination
- emptied and refilled regularly so as to avoid unacceptable contamination by micro-organisms, and
- of sufficient capacity to store enough water for the businesses potable water needs.



Separate designated containers should be used for clean and waste water e.g. colour coded and labelled. Waste water should discharge into a proper drainage system where available. If this is not possible, waste water must be put into closed holding containers of adequate capacity and disposed of at an appropriate disposal point (foul water drain). Containers used for waste water must be regularly cleaned and disinfected. Waste food debris including oil/fat must be disposed of responsibly. It is against the law to dispose of the oil down drains or into ditches.

## **12. WASTE**

Waste must not be allowed to accumulate on the floor. Any waste awaiting disposal, must be kept in suitable containers that are emptied regularly and not allowed to overflow. If disposal facilities are not available then the bin must be large enough to hold waste produced during the trading period. Waste must not be stored in any way that it will be an attraction to pests. It is recommended where open food is handled that all bins should have foot operated lids. The internal and external surfaces of non-disposable waste containers must be washable and kept in good repair and condition.

Sole traders who operate from an allocated base must make adequate refuse and collection arrangements at their base premises, such as a waste collection contract.

## **13. FITNESS TO WORK**

As a Food Business Operator it is your responsibility to ensure any person known or suspected to be suffering from, or to be a carrier of, food borne disease or infection, including vomiting, diarrhoea, skin infections, sores and open wounds is excluded from working in any food handling areas, until they have been free of symptoms for 48 hours, or medical clearance is obtained. You must also ensure your staff are aware of which illnesses should be reported, how to report them and who to report to.

## **HEALTH AND SAFETY MATTERS**

Under the *Health and Safety at Work (NI) Order 1978*, you have a duty to ensure that you operate your vehicle in a manner which ensures the health and safety of your staff and anyone affected by your work activity.

To ensure that any activity you carry out is done safely, you must carry out a risk assessment of that activity.

### **1. RISK ASSESSMENT**



To carry out a risk assessment, you should be first aware of the hazards involved. A hazard is something that can cause harm, e.g. a machine, substance or even a method of work. For each hazard, you have to decide what are the risks and the likelihood they could occur. Finally, you have to decide how to control these risks. For example:

<b>Hazard</b>	<b>Risk</b>	<b>Control</b>
LPG - (liquefied petroleum gas)	Explosions and fire	Regular maintenance by a competent person
Cleaning chemicals	Caustic burns to skin	The use of a safer alternative, or when not possible, personal protective equipment

Please note, under the *Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations (NI) 2000*, you must record any significant findings of the assessment when you employ five or more persons.

A leaflet entitled '*Five Steps to Risk Assessment*' provides further information and is available at <https://www.hseni.gov.uk/publications/five-steps-risk-assessment>

### **Lone Working and Emergency Contacts**

Given the nature of how mobile vehicles operate, it is very likely that you or a member of your staff may be on their own, away from means of communication. Should an emergency occur such as a fire, they will be unable to summon help. This aspect must be considered in your risk assessment and control measures. You should ensure that some means of communication, such as a mobile phone, is available to raise the alarm, if necessary.

## **2. CHEMICAL SAFETY**

Many of the chemicals that are used within the mobile vehicle, such as oven cleaners, degreasers etc, are potentially harmful if not used properly. Most proprietary cleaners provide information on safe use on the label but, if in doubt, you should obtain Safety Data Sheets on the various chemicals that you use from your suppliers. These will detail the safety precautions to follow, what protective equipment to wear etc.

You must ensure that any person who uses these chemicals is instructed in their use and that the appropriate personal protection equipment is provided and used.

## **3. MANUAL HANDLING**

You must carry out a risk assessment of all manual handling operations associated with your mobile catering unit e.g. lifting water containers or moving LPG cylinders. Wherever possible, you must introduce measures to either eliminate or reduce the amount of manual handling undertaken, e.g. provide a trolley for moving LPG cylinders.

Where the risk cannot be eliminated or reduced, then your staff must be given adequate instruction and training in manual handling.

## **4. EQUIPMENT**

The law requires equipment used at work to be designed, constructed, maintained, and used in a proper manner. Some equipment e.g. generators need fixed guarding to dangerous parts such as moving belts and nipping hazards. Equipment should be regularly checked and maintained. Proper instructions and training must also be given.

## **5. FRYER SAFETY**

The hazards from using, emptying, and cleaning fryers include fire, burns from hot oil, contact with hot surfaces, eye injuries from splashes, slips from oil spillage and strains and sprains from lifting and moving containers of oil. The law requires you to have a safe system of work in place when emptying and cleaning fryers and ensure that your staff are trained on this.

Burns from hot oil can be very serious. You should only carry out manual emptying and filtering of fryers when the oil has been cooled to 40 °C or below. This can take up to 6-7 hours. Oil should not be drained when it is above 40 °C. Where possible, you should carry out oil filtering and cleaning as a first task of the day rather than as part of your closing-down procedure.

Further guidance is available in HSE's information sheet 'Safety during emptying and cleaning of fryers' available at <https://www.hse.gov.uk/pubns/cais17.htm>

## 6. FIRST AID

The minimum first aid provision required by law is:

- a suitably stocked first aid kit
- an appointed person to take charge of first aid arrangements
- information for employees about first aid arrangements.

There is no mandatory list of items to put in a first aid kit, however, a suggested list of contents and further advice on first aid provision is provided in the HSE leaflet 'First Aid - Your Questions Answered', available at

[www.hse.gov.uk/pubns/indg214.htm](http://www.hse.gov.uk/pubns/indg214.htm)

## 7. GAS SAFETY (LPG - liquefied petroleum gas)



In mobile catering units where LPG is used, all gas cylinders should be housed in a compartment separate from the rest of the unit.

The storage compartment for the LPG must be:

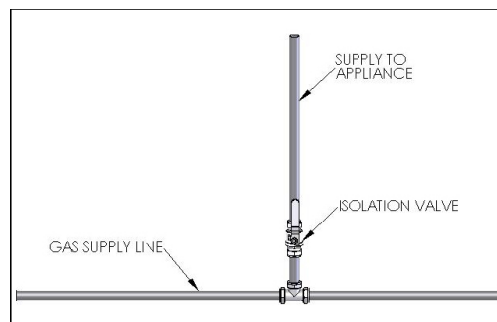
- constructed of materials having at least a half hour fire resistance
- sealed to prevent gas gaining access into the unit
- of sufficient size to store all LPG cylinders including spares and constructed so that access can only be obtained from outside the unit
- provided with ventilation openings at both high and low levels
- secured to prevent tampering
- used only for the storage of LPG cylinders, reducing valves etc. and not for any other purpose e.g. storage of batteries
- provided with a suitable means of securing the cylinders in an upright position
- located such that possible accidental damage e.g. in the event of a road traffic accident is minimised
- have a warning notice fixed to the exterior of the compartment with a red hazard diamond showing a flame and wording '*Extremely Flammable LPG*'
- kept free of all sources of ignition in the compartment and sources of ignition must be a minimum of one metre from any cylinder.

Where separate storage compartments are not available, LPG cylinders may be kept outside the unit providing:

- the cylinders are secured to prevent tampering and, in a position where they cannot easily be damaged, for example, by vehicles
- the cylinders are stored with the valve upright
- they are stored more than 1 metre away from the unit or any source of ignition
- all flexible tubing is kept to a minimum.

All appliances using LPG should be:

- Fitted with an accessible shut off valve or tap on the pipework immediately before the appliance.



## Ventilation to the vehicle

Permanent ventilation must be provided at both high and low levels to the vehicle and divided equally between both the high and low ventilation openings. These openings must not be obstructed by stored items.

## Pipework and Fittings

All pipework should be as short and accessible as possible and supported as required. Where practicable the pipework should be made of a suitable metal. Suitable metals for pipework are solid drawn copper tube, steel tube or stainless steel tube, used with soft solder, compression or malleable iron fittings.

Pipework running under the vehicle should have mechanical protection. All pipework should be adequately secured to the structure of the vehicle/ trailer. Where flexible hose is used, it is subject to the following restrictions:

- The length must not exceed 1.5 metres
- its use restricted to where it passes through walls and partitions
- where temperatures are unlikely to exceed 50°C

- must conform to BS3212 or any other appropriate European Standard and marked accordingly and must be renewed every two years.

## Appliances

Appliances such as grills, hot plates, ovens etc. should:

- be securely fastened to the vehicle
- not be in use whilst the vehicle is in motion and the gas supply turned off at the cylinders
- be manufactured to a recognised standard
- be installed, used and maintained in accordance with the manufacturer's advice
- have flame failure devices fitted, to prevent a build-up of gas in the vehicle in the event of a flame being extinguished.

Every LPG pipe should terminate with a readily accessible shut-off valve or tap immediately before the appliance.

All valves and taps should carry a clear indication of the open and closed positions, or of the direction they must be turned to close them.

## Maintenance of the LPG Installation

The Gas Safety (Installation and Use) Regulations (NI) 2004 (GSIUR) require that every employer or self-employed person ensures that any gas appliance, installation pipework or flue installed in any place of work under his control is *maintained in a safe condition* to prevent risk of injury.

Effective maintenance usually involves an ongoing programme of servicing and repairs, with this work being carried out by a suitably registered and qualified engineer.

UKLPG Code of Practice 24 Part 3:2017 'Use of LPG for Commercial Catering Events, Street Food and Mobile Catering' provides the following guidance on maintenance:

- Servicing should be undertaken in accordance with manufacturers' instructions with a *minimum frequency of 12 months* but where appliances and flues are subjected to *frequent use*, a *6 month* service frequency should be considered.
- Any maintenance work must only be undertaken by a Gas Safe registered engineer with the appropriate mobile catering qualification. (Note: Details of registered engineers are available at [www.gassaferegister.co.uk](http://www.gassaferegister.co.uk), including what they are registered to work on e.g. *Commercial Mobile Catering / type of appliance/LPG*).

- Following any work to a gas fitting or appliance the Gas Safe registered engineer must carry out gas safety checks to comply with GSIUR and record the results on their report. (Note: These safety records are important documents to evidence the ongoing maintenance of your gas installation and confirm the appliances in your mobile catering unit are safe).
- Before daily catering commences, the cylinders, pipework and appliances should be checked before operation by a suitably trained person. Checks should include:
  - visual inspection of flexible hoses
  - joints in pipework
  - correct flame picture accordingly to manufacturer instructions (for visible burners) and correct operation of appliances.



Any suspected leaks should be traced using a suitable leak detection fluid. If any faults are found that require work on the gas installation, the gas supply should be turned off and a suitably qualified Gas Safe registered engineer contacted for repair and retest.

### **Training and Instruction**

All persons working in the mobile unit must be given adequate instruction and information on:

- the possible dangers associated with LPG
- the correct procedures for changing cylinders
- the correct use of appliances
- proper combustion and the danger of ineffective ventilation and flues
- action to take in the event of an emergency.

## **8. FIRE SAFETY AND EMERGENCY PROCEDURES**

All staff must be trained in the emergency procedures in case of a fire. Specific advice on fire safety should be sought from the NI Fire and Rescue Service (NIFRS). As a minimum, you should:

- train all staff and display written instructions of the action required in the event of a fire or gas leak. For example:

- If there is a gas leak - turn off all equipment. Turn off the gas supply from the cylinder. If a cylinder is leaking, carefully move it from the vehicle into the open air.
- If there is a fire - evacuate the area immediately. If possible, turn off the gas supply by closing the valve. Fire fighting should only be carried out by NIFRS or persons who have been properly trained.
- where frying is carried out, provide a fire blanket and keep it within easy reach
- provide adequate fire extinguishers, located in a readily accessible position adjacent to the exit. One 5kg dry powder should be provided for each 2 cylinders connected.

## 9. ELECTRICAL SAFETY

The *Electricity at Work Regulations (NI) 1991* require employers and the self-employed to provide and maintain electrical equipment that is safe and appropriate for use.

The main hazards associated with electricity are:

- Contact with live parts causing shock and burns (normal mains voltage, 230 volts AC can kill)
- Faults which cause fires.

As part of your risk assessment (see above), you should consider the hazards associated with the electricity, decide who might be harmed, evaluate the risks and decide how to control these risks. There are many steps that you can take to reduce the risks arising from the use of electrical equipment, such as:

### **Ensure the electrical installation is safe**

- A competent person should install the electrical installation in a mobile catering unit.
- Plug and sockets on the generator or mains supply should be marked with a minimum IP rating of IP44 (Ingress Protection rating) to ensure that the connections are protected from the weather and natural hazards.
- Provide enough socket outlets - overloading socket outlets by using adaptors can cause fires.

### **Provide safe and suitable equipment**

- The use of double insulated (class II) portable appliances is encouraged because they do not include metallic parts which can become live in the event of certain faults. These are often marked with a 'double-square' symbol.
- Choose equipment that is suitable for its working environment.



- Use proper connectors or cable couplers to join lengths of cable - taped joints are not acceptable.
- The supply cables to equipment should be of a flexible type, not rigid core, to avoid damage to the conductors.
- The ends of flexible cables should have the outer insulation sheath of the cable firmly clamped to stop the wires (particularly the earth) being pulled out.

### **Reduce the voltage**

One of the best ways of reducing the risk of electric shock accidents is to limit the supply voltage, e.g. using 110V or lower equipment. Some fridges for example will operate on a 12V supply.

### **Provide a safety device**

Mobile catering units connected to the mains supply:

- Should be protected with an RCD (residual current device) having an operating current of 30mA and a disconnecting time of 40mS at an operating current of 150mA.
- Earth continuity throughout the supply installation is essential.
- RCDs include a test button that should be operated each day prior to trading. If the RCD 'trips', it is sign of a fault and you should consult a competent person immediately and have the electrical installation checked before using it again.

### **Carry out preventative maintenance**

All electrical systems, including portable appliances (e.g. a kettle), transportable appliances (e.g. a cooker) and fixed installations (fuse boxes, cabling, spur outlets etc.) must be properly maintained by a competent person. Although it is for you to decide how to maintain electrical systems, it is strongly recommended that a planned maintenance programme is put into place.

A suitable programme would include the following elements:

#### *Fixed electrical installation*

- should be examined and tested periodically by a competent person. The competent person will advise on the frequency of further examinations and tests.

#### *Electrical equipment*

- user visual checks - regular checks should be made by the user once they have received the appropriate training on how to recognise defects.
- formal visual checks - similar to user checks but this should be carried out at programmed intervals by a person who has received appropriate training.
- examination and testing (often called 'PAT testing') - proper inspection and test by a competent person will detect faults that visual inspection will not find, e.g. the breakdown of insulation. The competent person will advise on the frequency of such appliance testing.

### *Keeping of records*

Though it is not a legal requirement, it is strongly recommended that records of the formal visual checks and inspection and testing carried out by the competent person be kept. The records will help to demonstrate you are maintaining electrical systems.

### **Generators**

Mobile catering units frequently use single-phase generators, having an output not exceeding 10KVA, to supply power to various electrical appliances. *British Standard 7430* states it is often better to use these generators in an unearthed system, i.e. an earth rod does not have to be connected to the generator for it to operate safely. The installation of an RCD is recommended. Advice should be sought from a competent person regarding its installation.

### **Competent Person**

A competent person is someone with sufficient knowledge, training and experience enabling him/her to safely carry out work on an electrical installation or any electrical equipment e.g. a qualified and registered electrician.

## **10.NO SMOKING SIGNAGE**

You should ensure a 'No Smoking' sign is displayed in a prominent position at the entrance to your unit, to comply with the Smoking (NI) Order 2006.

## SUMMARY

It is important for you to comply with all aspects of food safety and health and safety legislation. In general, the law gives a common sense approach which is aimed at preventing problems occurring such as food poisoning, or injury to yourself, your employees, or anybody else who may be affected by your actions. It is no excuse to say that you were unaware of the legislation. It is up to you to ensure you are complying. So don't wait for the inspector to call!

**Final Note:** This leaflet does not aim to state exact legal requirements, and compliance with this guidance may not secure full compliance with the law. For further information on the exact requirements of the legislation you should contact your local Environmental Health Department.

### Further Information

For further information, please contact the Environmental Health Section at Lisburn & Castlereagh City Council by:

Calling us on:	<b>028 92 447397</b>
Emailing us at:	<b><a href="mailto:ehealth@lisburncastlereagh.gov.uk">ehealth@lisburncastlereagh.gov.uk</a></b>
Writing to us at:	<b>The Food Section Environmental Health Service Unit Lisburn and Castlereagh City Council Lagan Valley Island Lisburn BT27 4RL</b>

# **FOOD ALLERGENS AND INTOLERANCES**

WHEN MAKING YOUR ORDER OR TASTING OUR FOOD  
PLEASE SPEAK TO OUR STAFF ABOUT THE  
INGREDIENTS IN OUR FOOD.

PLEASE BE ADVISED THAT FOOD ALLERGENS MAY  
HAVE BEEN HANDLED IN PREPARATION OF YOUR  
FOOD. IN SOME CASES, ALLERGENS MAY BE  
UNAVOIDABLEY PRESENT DUE TO SHARED  
EQUIPMENT OR THE INGREDIENTS USED.

**THANK YOU**