

**HAND WASHING AND GLOVES
IN FOOD PREMISES**

Why is hand washing important?

Our hands collect bacteria which are then spread from one place to another.

For example, after going to the toilet our hands can carry bacteria from our bodies to the food we prepare. Some bacteria can cause food poisoning – so by washing our hands thoroughly we can prevent food poisoning bacteria getting into food.

Why should hands be washed in a designated hand washing facility?

The thorough washing and drying of hands is an important activity in the prevention of food poisoning.

All food premises are required to have hand washing facilities located where they can be easily accessed. Hand washing facilities must be provided with a supply of warm running water, soap and paper towels. If there are toilets in the food premises then hand washing facilities also need to be provided adjacent to the toilets or toilet cubicles.

Why use soap?

Liquid soap, when combined with warm water and a thorough washing action, assists in removal of bacteria, dirt, grease and surplus skin cells. The use of liquid soap helps to reduce the risk of spreading bacteria. A scrubbing brush may be of assistance to remove stubborn matter not easily removed by thorough hand washing alone.

What is the best way to dry hands?

Use disposable paper towels or hot air to dry hands without the risk of spreading bacteria. Shared towels mean you are sharing bacteria. It is important that tea towels are not used to dry hands. Bacteria from your hands will transfer to the towel and spread to equipment, crockery, cutlery and food contact surfaces.

When should I wash my hands?

Before

- Commencing work activities
- Handling food

After

- Using the toilet
- Blowing your nose, coughing or sneezing
- Scratching hair, nose or other body parts
- Handling rubbish or doing any dirty jobs
- Smoking

Between

- Handling raw and cooked food



Gloves or no gloves?

Wearing latex gloves is not a substitute for thorough hand washing using soap, warm running water and proper hand drying. If gloves are to be used, hands must be thoroughly washed before applying the gloves. Using gloves without thorough hand washing will allow harmful bacteria on the hands to contaminate the gloves and cause contamination of food.

Gloves are cheap and disposable and if used must not be washed for re-use. After discarding the gloves, hands must be properly washed with water and soap, as bacteria builds up on the hands while the gloves are worn.

The outside of gloves harbour bacteria and can lead to cross-contamination from one food to another. It is essential that gloves are changed regularly and between each activity.

The use of gloves can be supported to protect hands against allergies, dermatitis and some injuries.



Should you have any further queries, please contact the Shire's Health Service by calling 9290 6742