



INFORMATION REPORT

TO:	Mayor and Members Board of Health
COMMITTEE DATE:	November 14, 2016
SUBJECT/REPORT NO:	Special Events Guideline Update (BOH16030) (City Wide)
WARD(S) AFFECTED:	City Wide
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SIGNATURE:	

Council Direction:

Not Applicable

Information:

Background

Public Health Inspectors (PHIs) have a duty to inspect food premises, including special events, and any food and equipment present for the purpose of preventing, eliminating and decreasing the effects of health hazards in the community they serve. Food vendors at special events are “food premises” as defined under the Health Protection and Promotion Act (HPPA).

Under the Health Protection and Promotion Act (HPPA), all special event organizers must:

- Inform the Medical Officer of Health in advance whenever they plan to serve food to the public.
- Provide any information, as requested by PHIs, regarding the source and preparation of foods served.

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The Food Premises Regulation 562 falls under the HPPA and outlines the technical requirements for food premises operators. It is very difficult for food booths at special events to comply with these technical requirements under the Regulation. As special event food booths are temporary/transient in nature, guidelines were developed to enable safe food handling and minimize the risk of food borne illnesses.

Information

Special events are processed through the Special Event Advisory Team (S.E.A.T.) for the City of Hamilton. Public Health Services (PHS) makes sure that food is handled as safely as possible to minimize the risk of food borne illnesses that can negatively affect the community. Through the S.E.A.T. application process, when food is served or offered for sale to the public, event organizers complete the PHS special event application which includes the food vendor applications (see Appendix A). Organizers are asked to submit the complete package, including all proposed vendors, 14 days prior to the event to ensure PHIs have time to review proposed food service at the event. Prior to each of these special events, PHIs contact all special event organizers and vendors to discuss food safety requirements. Pre-event meetings with organizers are requested by PHIs to discuss food safety requirements and post event meetings to debrief on food safety issues identified.

Through the PHS application process, a risk assessment of the event and food vendors is completed. Risk assessment criteria can include the type of foods served such as potentially hazardous foods or non-hazardous foods, expected number of attendees, number of food vendors and length of the event. Potentially hazardous foods are those that support the growth of harmful bacteria because they're rich in protein and have high moisture content. These foods need to have their temperature watched very carefully to keep bacteria from growing, producing toxins and producing spores. Examples of such foods are milk or milk products, eggs, meat, poultry. Non-hazardous foods are foods that do not support the growth or production of harmful bacteria, toxins or spores. Examples of such foods are pre-packaged potato chips, popcorn, cookies. Events that are assessed as high risk, based on the vendor's application, are inspected and those that are not high risk are not inspected.

All food vendors at inspected events receive an inspection or a compliance check by PHIs; however, not all food vendors incur the PHS special event fee. Only those vendors serving potentially hazardous foods receive the full inspection that would require the user fee to be applied, while vendors serving non-hazardous foods receive a compliance check. Food trucks receive an inspection but do not incur the fee as they pay a license fee for routine inspections throughout the year. Many events are held over two to three days and involve afterhours and weekend inspections, which incur additional overtime costs to PHS.

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Once the event has ended the PHI compiles a summary of vendors inspected and food safety issues that were present. These pre and post meetings and phone consultations for special events account for approximately 532 hours of PHIs time.

General Food Safety Requirements for Special Events 2016

Food safety requirements fall into six broad categories when PHIs inspect a food vendor at a special event that handles potentially hazardous foods such as pre-cooked/ready-to-eat foods.

1. Food Preparation and Protection,
2. Equipment and Utensils,
3. Booth Construction,
4. Water and Wastewater,
5. Handwashing, and
6. Personal Hygiene

Food Preparation and Protection

- All major food preparation (i.e., foods that require much handling, chopping, cutting, wrapping) is to be completed in an approved kitchen facility.
- Protect food from potential contamination.
- All potentially hazardous foods must be transported, stored and maintained at required temperatures. Keep cold foods cold (4°C/41°F or lower) and hot foods hot (above 60°C/140°F). Potentially, hazardous foods held outside of these temperatures risk the growth of harmful bacteria, producing toxins and producing spores.
- A probe thermometer must be provided onsite to verify the internal temperature of food.

Equipment and Utensils

- Single service eating utensils such as plastic knives, forks, spoons, paper plates and cups to be used.
- Sufficient number of sinks to wash, rinse and sanitize cooking utensils.
- Food contact surfaces must be smooth, non-absorbent, corrosion-resistant, non-toxic and easily cleanable.

Booth Construction

- Booths must be constructed in a manner which minimizes the entry of wind, dust and rain (i.e., an overhead canopy with sides).
- All equipment including smoke generating barbeques and grills, freezers, refrigerators, hand wash basins and utensil cleaning set up must have overhead protection.
- Hand wash stations must be located in a convenient location for food handlers.

Water and Wastewater

- An adequate supply of potable water must be provided for each vendor.
- Hoses and connections used to transport drinking water or municipal water must be in compliance with the Ontario Building Code. The hoses must be clearly marked with the relative standard indicating type of hose such as NSF 61, drinking water.
- Vendors must provide a supply of hot and cold running water at sinks.
- Waste water must be disposed of in a sanitary manner.

Hand Washing

- When a hand wash sink is not available, a temporary hand wash basin with a container with a spigot that is capable of providing a continuous flow of warm running water, a supply of liquid soap and paper towel in a dispenser. It is required that vendors maintain warm water for hand washing. In addition, hot water must be provided on demand.
- Each hand washing station must be provided with:
 - Liquid soap in a dispenser,
 - Paper towels in a dispenser, and
 - A container to collect the waste water

Personal Hygiene

- Food handlers must wash their hands with clean water and soap.
- Absolutely no smoking or eating shall be permitted inside the vendor's booth.
- Food handlers must wear clean outer clothing and must confine their hair by wearing hairnets, baseball caps or other type of confinement.

City of Hamilton Events

In 2015, there were 316 special events held in the City of Hamilton's parks and roadways. There were 281 events that served or offered food to the public and were risk assessed. Of these events, 71 were risk assessed as high and warranted inspections by PHIs with approximately 1,003 food vendors present at these events

receiving 1,540 inspections. Special event organizers were invoiced for 488 food vendors in 2015.

Special Events monitoring and inspections are not included in Ministry of Health and Long Term Care (MOHLTC) Accountability Agreement Indicators as they are temporary and transient vendors. These indicators are intended to report on and respond to the performance of boards of health and health units. However, PHS is required to implement procedures to monitor, inspect and educate operators of transient and temporary food premises operating at special events under the Ontario Public Health Standards, Food Safety Protocol, 2015.

Under current guidelines, special event vendors are not permitted to handle/cook raw hazardous foods at Special Events such as uncooked poultry or ground meats. PHS will be revising current guidelines to permit this activity at special events in 2017 while minimizing the risk of food borne illnesses, supporting small businesses and community groups by creating a more diverse food experience for the public.

Special Event Requirements for Handling Raw Potentially Hazardous Food in 2017

These additional requirements are for special event vendors when they prepare/handle raw potentially hazardous foods at special events such as uncooked poultry or ground meats. All previous 2016 requirements will remain unaffected with the exception of food preparation and protection and hand washing.

Food Preparation and Protection

- All raw potentially hazardous foods are recommended to be pre-cut/pre-chopped in an approved kitchen facility prior to the event.
- Precooked meats are still recommended whenever possible to reduce the risk of foodborne illness.
- Dedicated coolers and containers for raw hazardous food products must be provided separate from pre-cooked or ready-to-eat foods to avoid potential cross contamination.
- Cooked foods must not be placed on plates, containers or work surfaces that previously held raw hazardous foods.
- All meats and meat products must be thoroughly cooked and reheated to the temperatures referred to below as per the Food Premises Regulation 562:

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Hazardous Food Items	Cooking °C (°F) for 15 seconds	Reheating °C (°F) for 15 seconds
Whole Poultry	82°C / 180°F	74°C / 165°F
Poultry / Ground Poultry	74°C / 165°F	74°C / 165°F
Pork / Pork Products	71°C / 160°F	71°C / 160°F
Ground Meat (beef, pork)	71°C / 160°F	71°C / 160°F
Fish	70°C / 158°F	70°C / 158°F
Hazardous Food Mixtures	74°C / 165°F	74°C / 165°F

Hand Washing

For events lasting one (1) day or less:

- A temporary hand wash basin will be permitted. A temporary hand wash basin consists of a container with a spigot that is capable of providing a continuous flow of warm running water, a supply of liquid soap and paper towel in a dispenser. Vendors must also provide a bucket or container to collect the waste water.

For events lasting two (2) or more days:

- A temporary hand wash basin may be permitted with a supply of liquid soap and paper towel in a dispenser. The use of a temporary hand wash basin will be determined upon the completion of a risk assessment. The risk assessment will be based on the type of food being prepared and the level of on-site food handling that is disclosed by the food vendor.
- Based on the results of a risk assessment a more structured hand wash basin may be required. For example, a foot pump operated hand wash basin equipped with warm running water, a supply of liquid soap and paper towel in a dispenser.

The number of inspected special events has been rising from 32 in 2010 to 71 in 2015, resulting in budget pressures, as well as challenges in meeting mandatory program targets for food safety inspections. PHS will monitor the potential increase in volume of inspections and staffing resource impacts.

APPENDICES / SCHEDULES ATTACHED

Appendix A to Report BOH16030 – Special Event Information Package - 2016