



## FOOD SAFETY

To ensure that the foods we serve and eat are safe, everyone involved in the food chain is responsible for some level of food safety. It begins with the producers (farms, processing plants, etc.) and ends at the consumer who also has an important role to play. The food industry and several government agencies work together to deliver food that is safe to consumers.

It is important to remember that the food handler plays a vital role in the safety of the food by ensuring the use of safe food handling practices in their kitchen.

The *Food Safety* section covers the following topics:

- Licensing Requirements
- Personal Hygiene
- Food Source
- Food Storage
- Food Preparation
- Cleaning and Maintenance
- Hand Washing Facilities
- Dishwashing Facilities
- Food Handler Training
- Safe Thawing and Safe Cooling Techniques (Appendix A)
- Hand Washing (Appendix B)
- Dishwashing (Appendix C)
- Definitions
- Community Contact Information



## Licensing Requirements

The purpose of the **Health Protection and Promotion Act** is to provide for the organization and delivery of public health programs and services, the prevention of the spread of disease and the promotion and protection of the health of the people of Ontario. The legislation specifies that boards of health must provide or ensure the provision of a minimum level of public health programs and services in each of the specified areas.

The **Ontario Ministry of Health and Long Term Care** has published numerous standards that set out the minimum requirements for fundamental public health programs and services targeted at the prevention of disease, health promotion and health protection.

The goal of the **Food Safety** standard is to improve the health of the population by reducing the incidence of foodborne illness. The objectives of the standard are:

1. To ensure that food is stored, prepared, served and distributed in a manner consistent with accepted public health practices.
2. To stop the sale or distribution of food that is unfit for human consumption by reason of disease adulteration, impurity or other cause.

The food safety standard also includes requirements for the delivery of food safety information, inspections of food premises, food handler training courses, food recalls, response to food safety complaints and data collection and reporting requirements.

All food premises are evaluated each year according to the potential risk they have to cause a foodborne illness. Premises are categorized as high, medium or low risk. The level of risk will determine the food safety strategy the Public Health Inspector will use during inspection. Day Nurseries are normally considered high risk based on the full menu and the population served. They are to be inspected not less than once every four months.

The **Ontario Food Premises Regulation 562** (under the Health Protection and Promotion Act) is the legislation that applies to all food service premises in Ontario. The definition of food service premise is any food premise where meals or meal portions are prepared for immediate consumption or sold or served in a form that will permit immediate consumption on the premises or elsewhere.

A recent copy of the Health Protection and Promotion Act or the Food Premises Regulation 562 can be obtained by visiting:

**Ontario E-Laws Statutes and Regulation Web Site**  
**[www.e-laws.gov.on.ca](http://www.e-laws.gov.on.ca)**



## Personal Hygiene

While personal hygiene may be a sensitive subject, it is vital to food safety. Personal cleanliness is the single most important factor in the prevention of food borne illness. Following a few simple rules will ensure the health of employees and clients.

1. Food handlers are to be clean and wear clean outer garments.
2. Food handlers' hair is to be confined when preparing, handling and serving food.
3. Food handlers are to wash their hands frequently. Wash hands before starting work, before handling or preparing foods, after handling raw meat, after using the restroom, sneezing, coughing, blowing their nose or handling money and after every possible point of contamination (*Appendix B*).
4. Food handlers must be free from infectious agents that may be spread through food or water.
5. Employees with stomach cramps, diarrhea, a sinus infection or other flu-like symptoms should report any illness to their supervisor immediately. If employees are ill, they should stay home or go home. Managers and/or supervisors shall ensure that appropriate action is taken, which may include excluding that individual from activities that involve the handling of food or food contact surface, or authorizing the individual's absence from the workplace.
6. When serving/dispensing food, use utensils such as tongs, ladles, lifters and spoons whenever possible. Never serve with your fingers.
7. Do not dip fingers into food or lick fingers for any reason.
8. No double-dipping of utensils when tasting food. Ladle a small amount of food into a dish and taste the food from the dish with a spoon. Do not reuse the spoon.
9. Do not touch hair, face or other parts of the body with your hands and then handle food.
10. Wear non-latex based gloves if you have a cut or burn on your hands. Do not handle food directly while wearing a bandage.
11. Keep fingernails short, clean and never wear nail polish to work.
12. Leave all jewellery including rings and watches at home. Never wear jewellery when preparing food.
13. Do not smoke, eat or chew gum while working.



## Food Source

When purchasing or accepting foods into your facility there are many guidelines we recommend. Listed below are just a few things we ask you to keep in mind when choosing a food to serve in your facility.

1. All food products must be from an approved source and must have been inspected or graded. For example, all eggs must be graded - either Grade A or B; no farm fresh eggs permitted. All meat must be inspected, no wild game obtained through hunting is permitted on-site.
2. Purchase perishable foods with 'Best Before' dates or spoilage time in mind. Remember that once opened, some foods can spoil quickly regardless of the 'Best Before' date.
3. When food is ordered from a commercial outlet a list of ingredients should be requested. This list must be made available to parents on request.
4. Screen all donated foods carefully. Refuse to accept produce with spots or soft, mushy parts. Do not accept 'reduced' produce.
5. Canned food should be free of dents, cracks or bulging lids. Do not accept any home canned or jarred foods.
6. Buy cold and frozen foods last. Take these foods straight to the daycare and refrigerate/freeze immediately.

## Food Storage

Refrigerators and freezers are your main tools for keeping potentially hazardous foods cold enough to prevent bacteria from growing. Providing the necessary facilities and equipment for storing food safely and training employees to monitor each kind of food while it is in storage should be part of routine staff training.

1. Adequate refrigerator storage space must be provided. Refrigerators must be equipped with accurate indicating thermometers. Place the thermometer closest to the door.
2. Store all raw foods on the bottom shelf of your refrigerator below all cooked and ready-to-eat foods.
3. Keep raw foods separate from cooked or ready-to-eat foods.
4. All cold hazardous foods must be maintained at an internal temperature of 4°C (40°F) or less. All hot hazardous foods must be maintained at an internal temperature of 60°C (140°F) or greater.
5. Keep all utensils and dishes in closed cupboards. Store glasses and cups upside down.



6. All pre-packaged, non-hazardous foods such as breads, cereals, peanut butter, cookies and crackers must be stored in a dry clean area on shelves located at least 15 cm (6") off the floor.
7. Keep all foods covered or in a container with a tight fitting lid to protect from contamination.
8. Rotate food in order of purchase. Remember FIFO (refer to definitions).
9. Store cleaning/disinfecting agents, insecticides and other chemical products separately from food and out of reach of children.

## Food Preparation

Many foods are most at risk during preparation and service. As foods are thawed, cooked, held, served and cooled, they may pass through the temperature danger zone several times. Each time food is handled, it runs the risk of cross contamination from other food and from food contact surfaces, such as hands, cutting boards and utensils.

1. Prepare all foods as close to serving time as possible.
2. Never thaw foods at room temperature. Refer to *Appendix A* for Methods of Safe Thawing.
3. Hot foods must be cooled to 4°C (40°F) within 6 hours. Refer to *Appendix A* for guidelines on proper cooling.
4. Never reheat leftovers more than once. No second chance for leftovers.
5. Contaminated food may smell and appear good. Never taste food that you suspect is questionable. It may be contaminated. Never serve mouldy food, even if mould can be scraped off or cut out.
6. Do not handle the inside of cups, glasses, bowls or the eating ends of cutlery. Pick up cutlery and serving utensils by the handles.
7. Work surfaces for food preparation must be cleaned after each use. Wash work surfaces with hot soapy water. Rinse, then sanitize by spraying with a sanitizing solution. Sanitizing solutions may contain chlorine (bleach), iodine, quats (quaternary ammonium) or any other agent that is non-toxic and sanitizes effectively. (Consult a Public Health Inspector prior to the use of any new product)
8. Ensure an accurate probe thermometer is available to check internal food temperatures.
9. Ensure that meat, fish, poultry and eggs are cooked to the minimum internal temperatures specified in the Ontario Food Premises Regulation 562 (under the Health Protection and Promotion Act). See chart below.



Product	Celsius (°C)	Fahrenheit (°F)
<b>Ground Meat and Meat Mixtures</b> (excluding poultry)	<b>74</b>	<b>165</b>
<b>Beef, Veal, Hamburger</b> Deboned and rolled	<b>71</b>	<b>160</b>
<b>Lamb/Goat</b>	<b>71</b>	<b>160</b>
<b>Pork</b>	<b>71</b>	<b>160</b>
<b>Poultry</b>		
Chicken, whole	<b>82</b>	<b>180</b>
Turkey, whole	<b>82</b>	<b>180</b>
Poultry breasts	<b>74</b>	<b>165</b>
Poultry thighs, wings	<b>74</b>	<b>165</b>
Ground poultry	<b>74</b>	<b>165</b>
Stuffing (cooked alone or in bird)	<b>74</b>	<b>165</b>
Duck, goose, pheasant	<b>74</b>	<b>165</b>
<b>Seafoods</b>		
Fish, shellfish and other seafoods	<b>70</b>	<b>158</b>

## Cleaning and Maintenance

Each daycare needs an overall cleaning program to organize all cleaning and sanitizing tasks. Your program should help you identify your cleaning needs, set up a master cleaning schedule, select the supplies and tools you need and train your employees to make the best use of their skills.

1. Keep storage areas dry, well maintained, well-lit and clean.
2. Garbage is to be stored in leak proof, non-absorbent container and removed from the premises as often as necessary to maintain a sanitary condition.
3. Screen all doors and windows in your day nursery and maintain in good repair. If a pest or rodent problem is suspected, contact a professional pest control operator immediately.



## Hand Washing Facilities

Train your employees to properly wash their hands and make sure that they have proper hand washing stations and supplies. The hand washing station must be located to allow convenient use by food handlers in the food preparation area and be accessible for use at all times.

1. A sink equipped with hot and cold running water, liquid soap and paper towel in dispensers is required for hand washing in any area where food is prepared. This sink is to be used for hand washing and for no other purpose.

## Dishwashing Facilities

There are 2 acceptable methods for washing dishes that are approved by the health unit. Depending of what is being washed; you must choose either a 3-compartment sink or dishwasher – for any utensil or dish that touches a person's mouth (forks, spoons, cups/glasses, plates) or a 2-compartment sink – for pots/pans, cutting boards, serving utensils.

1. All dishes used in the preparation of foods must be washed and sanitized in a two-compartment sink according to the two-compartment sink method. (*Appendix C*).
2. All dishes used for eating must be washed and sanitized in a three-compartment sink according to the three-compartment sink method or in a mechanical dishwasher. (*Appendix C*).
3. Mechanical dishwashing is acceptable using a household dishwasher, which has a separate sanitizing cycle (temperature booster) and is capable of effectively cleaning and sanitizing. Environmental swabs taken by the public health inspector will confirm proper cleaning and sanitizing.
4. If a three-compartment sink or dishwasher is not available, single service items/dishes must be used.

## Food Handler Training

The Thunder Bay District Health Unit offers food handling courses that promote safe food handling within the food service industry. This successful program has been designed to familiarize food industry staff with safe food handling practices to ensure that food is prepared, stored and served in a manner that is consistent with the Food Premises Regulation under the Health Protection and Promotion Act.

To obtain further information on our face to face Level 1 Safe Food Handling Course or our IN GOOD HANDS on-line food safety course, contact the Inspection Department at (807) 625-5930 or toll free at 1-888-294-6630.



## **APPENDIX A**

### **SAFE THAWING TECHNIQUES**

#### **NEVER DEFROST POULTRY, SEAFOOD OR MEATS AT ROOM TEMPERATURE.**

##### **Refrigerator Method:**

- The **safest** way to thaw foods is to place them in a refrigerator.
- Place food in its wrapping on a drip-proof tray or plate or in a container.
- Store raw foods on lowest shelves to prevent them from dripping or splashing other foods.
- Allow 6-9 hours per pound (14-20 hours/kg) to defrost.

##### **Cold Water Method:**

- Unwrap the frozen meat, poultry, or fish and place in a container.
- Place this container in a clean and sanitized sink under the water tap.
- Pour cold **RUNNING** water on the food in the container.
- Let the cold water run constantly *or* add ice to the water (and change this water often) to make sure that the water stays cold.
- Ensure the sink is cleaned and sanitized after thawing is completed.
- Allow 30 minutes per pound (1 hour/kg) to defrost.

##### **Microwave Method:**

- Thawing uncooked frozen meat in a microwave is *only recommended* if the food is to be cooked immediately after thawing.
- Microwave heat is often uneven and the outside portions of foods should be removed as they thaw. This will keep the outside from starting to cook before the inside thaws (refrigerate the removed portions until food is cooked).

### **SAFE COOLING TECHNIQUES**

#### **Hot food must be cooled rapidly to reduce the time it spends in the Temperature Danger Zone {Between 4°C (40°F) and 60°C (140°F)}.**

#### **Never put extremely hot foods in a refrigerator!**

When cooling large batches or pieces of food:

- Break or cut the food up into smaller pieces.
- Divide large batches into several smaller ones.
- Stir the foods as they cool.
- Place food in shallow pans and/or an ice water bath.

**Ensure that foods cool from 60°C (140°F) to 4°C (40°F) within 6 hours.**

##### **2 Stage Cooling Guideline**

**60°C (140°F) to 20°C (68°F) within 2 hours.**

**20°C (68°F) to 4°C (40°F) within 4 hour s.**



## APPENDIX B

# HANDWASHING

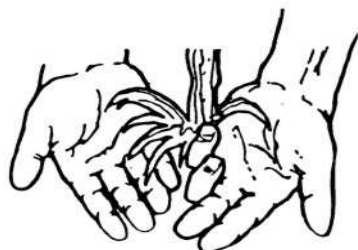
**HANDWASHING IS THE SINGLE MOST IMPORTANT MEANS OF PREVENTING THE SPREAD OF INFECTION!**

### When to wash your hands:

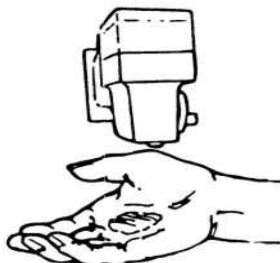
- Before and after workshift.
- Before and after food preparation.
- After handling contaminated items. (i.e. raw food, money)
- Before and after going to the washroom.
- Anytime your hands become soiled.
- After helping a child use a toilet.
- Before and after coffee breaks.
- After taking care of a sick child.
- After coughing, sneezing or touching your nose, mouth or face.
- Before and after eating and drinking.
- After smoking.
- After handling pets or animals.

### How to wash your hands:

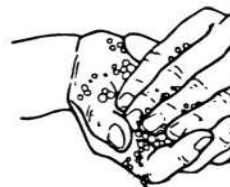
1. Wet Hands



2. Soap



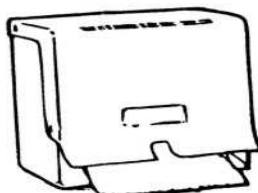
3. Lather for 15-20 seconds



4. Rinse



5. Towel Dry



6. Turn Tap Off With Towel



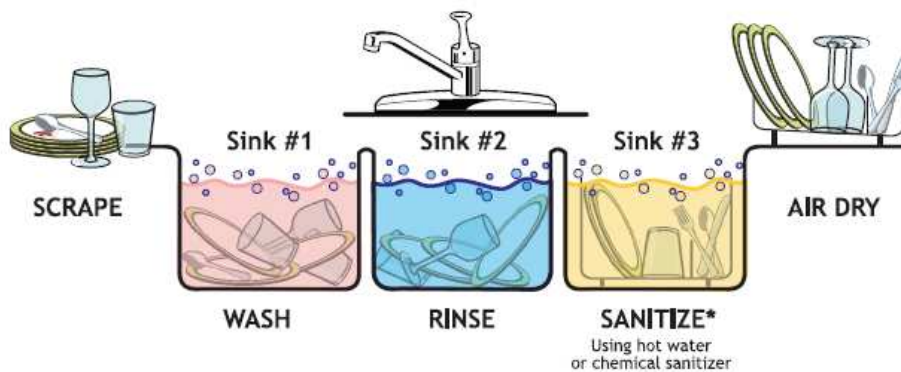


Appendix C

# DISHWASHING

## Dishwashing - 3 sink method

For Multiservice Articles



## Dishwashing - 2 sink method

For Pots, Pans and Cooking Utensils



**\*Sanitize using hot water:**  
 • Dishes must be immersed in hot water (77°C) for 45 seconds

OR

**\*Sanitize using chemical sanitizers:**  
 • Water temperature for chemical sanitizing must be 24°C (75°F).  
 • Sanitize for 45 seconds.  
 • NEVER mix chemicals. Combining chemicals is toxic.

• Use one of the following chemical sanitizers, and measure it correctly!  
**Chlorine ("bleach"):** 100 ppm (1 oz per gallon of water)  
**Iodine:** 25 ppm (0.25 oz per gallon of water)  
**Quaternary Ammonium ("Quats"):** 200 ppm (2 oz per gallon of water)

[www.ingoodhands.ca](http://www.ingoodhands.ca)

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## Definitions

**Approved source/food premises** - the food and/or establishment has been inspected by an official government agency i.e. Thunder Bay District Health Unit

**Cleaning** - the physical removal of dirt, soil and grease, typically carried out with soap/detergent, water and a scrubbing action

**Cross contamination** – the transfer of disease-causing micro-organisms to food. i.e. chicken blood dripping onto cold cuts in the refrigerator

**FIFO** – first in, first out; a method of stock rotation that ensures that those foods which are received first, are used first

**Food grade container** - corrosion-resistant, non-toxic, non-absorbent containers safe for storing food in

**Food premises** - any place where food is prepared, sold or served or eaten

**Food premises regulation** - the provincial regulation that outlines the requirements for a food premises

**High risk/hazardous food** - any food that is capable of supporting the growth or survival of disease causing micro-organisms or their toxins

**Internal temperature** – internal (inside) temperature of food

**Micro-organism** - very small life forms that may only be seen with a microscope; can be found in soil, dust, water, air, in and on humans and animals (i.e. viruses & bacteria) **Note:** some micro-organisms can cause life threatening diseases i.e. salmonella bacteria in chicken

**Low risk food**- any food that it is not normally capable of supporting the growth or survival of illness- causing micro-organisms or their toxins

**Perishable food** – foods that spoil or decay quickly if improperly stored

**Pre-packaged food** - food that is packaged at an approved food premises other than the premises where it is offered for sale

**Probe thermometer** - a thermometer that reads both hot and cold temperatures that can be easily inserted into foods to verify food preparation and storage temperatures

**Ready-to-eat food** – a food that will not be cooked prior to eating, i.e. luncheon meat, cheese, salad, sandwiches

**Sanitize (sanitized, sanitizing)** - the reduction in number of disease-causing micro-organisms, typically carried out with a chlorine and water solution (1 part chlorine to 10 parts of water)

**Utensil** - any article used in the preparation or handling of food.



## **Community Contact Information**

### **Environmental Health Program**

Thunder Bay District Health Unit  
999 Balmoral St.  
Thunder Bay, ON P7B 6E7  
Phone: 807-625-5930 or 1-888-294-6630  
Confidential Fax: 807-625-4822

#### **\*Ask to speak with duty inspector**

*Public health inspectors are responsible for the delivery of the following programs: safe water, food safety, health hazard investigation and injury prevention. A phone duty inspector is available from 8:30am to 4:30pm each day to provide recommendations and advice.*

### **Infectious Disease Program**

Thunder Bay District Health Unit  
999 Balmoral St.  
Thunder Bay, ON P7B 6E7  
Phone: 807-625-8318 or 1-888-294-6630  
Confidential Fax: 807-625-4822

*Three public health inspectors and five public health nurses are responsible for the delivery of the following programs: infection control, control of infectious diseases and tuberculosis control. They are available for consultation.*

### **Canadian Food Inspection Agency (CFIA)**

977 Alloy Drive  
Thunder Bay, ON P7B 5Z8  
Phone: 807-683-4370

CFIA  
Food Health Hazard Complaints  
Toll Free: 1-800-701-2737

*The CFIA is a federal agency that is responsible for ensuring food safety in the following areas: packaged foods, dairy, canned goods, breads, meat processing, fish, etc (any foods that cross provincial borders). You may contact them regarding any concerns or complaints about packaged foods by calling the above health hazard complaint line. They are also responsible for proper labelling of foods. This agency also conducts food recalls and allergy alerts as needed to ensure the safety of Canadians.*

### **Agriculture and Food**

General Inquiries  
Toll Free: 1-888-466-2372

*This agency can be contacted with any questions or concerns regarding the following: vegetables and fruits, farmers markets, eggs, honey, meat processing.*

**Ontario Ministry of Labour**

435 James Street South, Ste. 222  
Thunder Bay ON P7E 6S7  
Phone: 807-475-1691 or 1-800-465-5016  
Fax: 807-475-1646

**\*Ask to speak with duty inspector**

*This provincial agency is an important contact when concerns or questions are raised regarding worker safety and worker rights. They can be an important agency when developing occupational health and safety procedures and collecting and interpreting MSDS (Material Safety Data Sheet) data.*

**Food Action Network**

Community Nutrition Promoters  
Thunder Bay District Health Unit  
999 Balmoral St.  
Thunder Bay, ON P7B 6E7  
Phone: 807-625-8816 or 1-888-294-6630  
Fax: 807-623-2369

- Food Action Network  
North of Superior Region  
Phone: 807-826-4860 or 1-888-294-6630  
Fax: 807-826-4993
- Food Action Network  
Greenstone Region  
Phone: 807-854-0454 or 1-888-294-6630  
Fax: 807-854-1871