

 West Lothian Council	Environmental Health		SUBJECT: EVENT CATERING AT FETES, GALA DAYS, FUND RAISERS etc
	4	Food Safety/Food Hygiene	NUMBER: FH11
Reviewed: 24/12/2007		Health & Safety	KEYWORDS: EVENT CATERING
		Public Health	
STATUS: PUBLIC ADVICE		Pollution Control	
		Pest Control/Dog Warden	

Information Sheet FH11

Event Catering at Fetes, Gala Days, Fund Raisers etc.

Introduction

Providing food at your event can add a great deal to its success, and be good for fundraising, but things can and sometimes do go wrong. And did you know that the food safety laws apply to most events like yours?

In particular we worry about *E.coli*, and similar germs, which are more of a problem for event catering. These germs can be found widely in the environment, and may only need very small numbers in food to cause illness.

Thankfully, just a few basic precautions can help to avoid problems, and ensure that everyone enjoys their day. We would like you to think carefully about the following points when planning your event.

Food Safety Planning

Plan good food hygiene and safety into your event right from the start.

- Have someone on the team who understands about food safety, and listen to their advice – or ask us.
- If you are using a field for your event, has the land been used for grazing animals? If so then there can be special problems. Please contact us for further help.
- Make sure your resources match your plans, e.g. is the venue suitable, with enough equipment, space, fridges, people etc. for the types and amount of food to be served?
- Is the water supply safe, and will there be enough for all your needs? Will there be enough hot water? Hand washing, washing up, toilets and drinking water all need to be planned.
- Don't do high risk foods if you are not equipped for it – stick to safer alternatives instead. What are high-risk foods? Ask us if you are in any doubt.
- Using disposables can be safer and more convenient, but remember to plan for the extra refuse this creates.
- Avoid self-service as much as possible – unwashed hands contaminate food.

- Also plan for the safety of staff and guests – especially children. Think about fire risks, gas cylinders, electrical systems etc. Are there safe routes in and out? What happens in an emergency? You may need specialist advice on this – please ask us for help if you need it.
- Use proper catering grade cleaners, soap etc. We recommend using ‘Bactericidal’ cleaners rather than ‘Antibacterial’.
- Have you got enough chilled storage for **all** high-risk foods, right up to the time they are served?
- Plan preparation so that food is not left lying at room temperature for long.
- Give cookers / hot cabinets time to warm up before using them.
- Use fly netting or draped sheets over openings / doorways to keep flies out.
- Think about what you will do in an emergency e.g. if the gas or water supply fails, not enough helpers turn up, the weather turns nasty etc.

Further help

Remember it is your responsibility to ensure that the food served to your customers is safe. If you would like help, or need any further advice, then please contact us on 01506 282500 or environmentalhealth@westlothian.gov.uk