

Cleaning and Sanitising Without Gas or Electricity

This fact sheet is for the food industry and provides information about cleaning and sanitising.

In the event of a disruption to domestic and commercial natural gas or electricity supplies your business will need to maintain adequate hygiene practices possibly without access to your usual source of hot water, until supplies return to normal.

The good news is that effective cleaning and sanitising can still be achieved by following these simple guidelines.

Tips for Cleaning and Sanitising

- Remember—the warmer the water you use for cleaning, the more effective the detergent is likely to be. A little hot water will go a long way!;
- If you are using detergents in cold water in situations that normally use hot water—you may need to increase the concentration;
- Use a little more ‘elbow-grease’ than normal;
- Clean more often; and
- Pre-rinse as much as possible. Remember—moist food waste is easier to remove than dried on soils.

Manual Washing Up

- Remove as many food scraps as possible from equipment and utensils using disposable paper towelling;
- Pre-rinse items with cold water;
- Wash with cold water using your normal detergent. If you can add hot water—all the better. When washing with cold water in situations that normally use hot water— increase the concentration of the detergent;
- Rinse with cold water and place in sanitiser solution—either using your usual sanitiser or 12.5mls of domestic bleach (4% available chlorine) diluted in 10 litres of potable tap water;
- Rinse with clean water; and

- Either air dry equipment and utensils, or dry with single use paper towels.

Washing Up Items Heavily Soiled with Grease and Burnt On Food

(e.g. fryers, grills, saucepans etc.)

These items can normally be cleaned using hot water and detergent. However with cold water, it is recommended that heavier duty alkaline or chlorinated alkaline detergents are used.

If you are using stronger chemical cleaners than usual, ensure that you and your staff wear gloves, protective clothing, closed shoes and goggles.

Washing Up Using a Dishwasher if Electricity Is Available

Some domestic and commercial dishwashers are designed to either:

- draw hot water from the mains; (these can only be used in a gas crisis if the mains hot water service is electric) or, if there is no hot water available.
- to internally heat the water to the required temperature using an electric coil. Note—this may take longer than normal and be more expensive.

However, for items that are heavily soiled with grease or burnt on food it is preferable to use the dish washer so that the hot water activates the detergent solution and breaks down the grease at 65°C and sanitises at a temperature of 82°C during the final rinse cycle.

Ensure the dish washer is not overloaded as this will hinder effective cleaning and sanitising.

Cleaning and Sanitising Food Contact Surfaces

- Remove as much surface soil and waste matter as possible using a disposable paper cloth.
- Pre-rinse surface with water.
- Wash surface with a normal detergent—preferably use a detergent/sanitiser. If washing with cold water in situations that normally use hot water—increase the concentration after consulting your chemical supplier.

Rinse surface with clean water and allow to dry before use.

Sanitising Fruit and Vegetables

Follow normal procedures for cleaning and sanitising fruit and vegetables—ie. using a solution containing chlorine at 50ppm.

Cross Contamination

If you have to use the same sink for cleaning and sanitising equipment and utensils as for sanitising fruit and vegetables, make sure that the sink is cleaned and sanitised effectively between use.

For Further Advice and Information:

Other fact sheets are available from your local council.

Brochure (available at major supermarkets)

Fact Sheets Cooking Food Safely, and Maintaining a Healthy Diet.

On healthy eating contact your general practitioner, community health service or maternal and child health nurse.

On safe food handling: contact your local council or Food Safety Victoria on 1300 364 352