

Cleaning and Sanitising

Under the legislation, food businesses need to keep their premises, fixtures, fittings, equipment and food transport vehicles clean and sanitary. This means things like food scraps, dirt, grease, etc. should not be left to accumulate. It also means that utensils and surfaces that come in contact with food should be clean and sanitary. Cleaning is removing general dirt, grease and food waste. Sanitising destroys microorganisms. You need to clean items before you sanitise them.

What is cleaning?

Cleaning involves the following steps:

- Scaping or wiping away food scraps and rinsing with water
- Washing using hot water and detergent to remove grease and dirt
- Rinsing off any loose dirt or detergent residue

What is sanitising?

Sanitising is the process of applying heat or chemicals to reduce the number of bacteria to a safe level.

Sanitising can be done using a dishwasher or chemicals.

How to sanitise effectively?

Make sure the item to be sanitised is clean as sanitising is not effective on unclean surfaces.

- Soak items in very hot water (77°C for 30 seconds) or in diluted bleach; or
- Saturate items with 70% alcohol; or
- Use a food-grade chemical sanitiser and follow the manufacturer's instructions; or
- Use a dishwasher that can sanitise (usually the longest and hottest setting);
- Air-drying is best; and
- Where you can, remove parts like stab mixer sticks and slicer blades to sanitise.

Dishwasher

- Make sure you use the hottest rinse cycle available*
- Economy cycle on a domestic dishwasher is not adequate*

Chemicals sanitisers

- Generally chlorine-based or ammonium based compounds.

- Make sure you use a food-grade sanitiser otherwise you could contaminate food
- Dilution rates, contact times and safety instructions vary from product to product
- Always follow the manufacturer's instructions
- Sanitiser solution can be applied using a spray bottle for surfaces and equipment that can not fit in the sink to rinse.

Bleach

- Unscented bleach is a chlorine-based chemical that can be used to sanitise. A bleach concentration of 50ppm is only effective when used with warm water (38°C).

Vinegar or methylated spirits

- Should not be used as sanitisers
- Vinegar is a weak acid and not effective enough to destroy bacteria to safe levels
- Methylated spirits can leave chemical residue on surfaces and contaminate food

Steps involved in cleaning and sanitising crockery and equipment:

1. Scrape to remove excess food.
2. Rinse with clean warm to hot water to remove food particles.
3. Use detergent with warm or hot water to remove remaining grease or food particles.
4. Rinse again to remove detergent.
5. Sanitise with a chemical sanitiser (following product instructions, correct dilution rates and minimum holding times for the sanitiser to work successfully).
6. Final rinse with warm to hot running water to remove the chemical sanitiser and avoid chemical food contamination.
7. Air dry, do not use tea towels or cloths to dry items as they carry high levels of bacteria and could contaminate the item you have just cleaned and sanitised.

Cleaning and Sanitising Equipment

The *Australian Standard AS4674 for the Design, Construction and Fit-Out of Food Premises* requires the following minimum facilities to enable businesses to effectively clean and sanitise:

- Premises selling pre-packaged food and drink and/or uncut fruit and vegetables only single bowl sink
- All other premises: Double bowl sink; or Dishwasher/glasswasher and single bowl sink (where all the food contact equipment will fit in the dishwasher/glasswasher); or A double bowl sink and a dishwasher/glasswasher (where some equipment has to be washed/sanitised in the sink); or A triple bowl sink (where rinsing is required before or after sanitising, e.g. wash, rinse, sanitise procedure or wash, rinse/sanitise, rinse procedure)

If preparing lots of salads and vegetables, you may also require a separate sink to wash them before being prepared to avoid cross contamination. Sinks should also be cleaned and sanitised regularly to avoid cross contamination when washing fruit and vegetables. A separate cleaner's sink to dispose of dirty water from the mop and bucket is a good idea. This can prevent contamination of sinks used for cleaning and sanitising utensils and equipment



How a double bowl sink can be used to clean and sanitise eating and drinking utensils and food contact surfaces of equipment.

(Image source – NSW Food Authority
http://www.foodauthority.nsw.gov.au/Documents/industry/cleaning_sanitising_food_businesses.pdf)

Dilution Rates for Use of Bleach

Table 1: Using bleach as a sanitiser

| How much water? | How much bleach? | | | | | |
|------------------------------|-------------------------|---------|-------------------------------|---------|---------------------------|---------|
| | Household (4% chlorine) | | Strong domestic (6% chlorine) | | Commercial (10% chlorine) | |
| Concentration required (ppm) | 50 ppm | 100 ppm | 50 ppm | 100 ppm | 50 ppm | 100 ppm |
| Water temp | Warm | Cold | Warm | Cold | Warm | Cold |
| 1 litre | 1.25 ml | 2.5 ml | 0.85 ml | 1.7 ml | 0.5 ml | 1 ml |
| 10 litres | 12.5 ml | 25 ml | 8.5 ml | 17 ml | 5 ml | 10 ml |
| 50 litres | 62.5 ml | 125 ml | 42.5 ml | 85 ml | 25 ml | 50 ml |

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More Information

Visit NSW Food Authority's website:

http://www.foodauthority.nsw.gov.au/Documents/industry/cleaning_sanitising_food_businesses.pdf

Alternatively, contact Council and ask to speak with the Environmental Health Officer.