Clean a food handling area – course notes

Course Overview

This course covers the legislative and cleaning requirements to maintain food-handling areas where the work does not involve direct food contact. This unit is not appropriate for a person who has direct contact with food, raw materials or ingredients.

Food-handling areas include food courts and industrial food-processing plants.

The course teaches students legal requirements, hygiene and cleaning procedures when working in a food handling area. Selecting the appropriate equipment, chemicals and cleaning methods is essential to maintaining a hygienic, clean and safe food handling environment.

In this course you will learn how to:

Section 1 - Introduction to food handling and hygiene
Section 2 - Assess cleaning requirements for food handling area
Section 3 - Select cleaning equipment and chemicals
Section 4 - Prepare for cleaning
Section 5 - Cleaning food handling and food service areas
Section 6 - Clean and store equipment

Please click 'next" for assessment and completion requirements.
CPPCLO3038A Clean food-handling areas

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Section 1 - Introduction to food handling and hygiene

When you finish this section you will have an understanding of the following concepts and ideas:

1.2 Food Handling
1.3 Hygiene and the law
1.4 What is a food safety program?
1.5 Food Hazards and food handling principles
1.6 How does food become contaminated?
1.7 Bacterial contamination
1.8 Cross-contamination
1.2 Food Handling

Cleaning food handling areas is important because these areas must be kept clean and hygienic; that is, free from dangerous germs that could cause food poisoning.

If you do not maintain a high standard of cleaning, dangerous bacteria can grow and contaminate food.

There are many types of surfaces found in food handling areas. These include: stainless steel and laminated plastic counters, tables and chairs.

The cleaning techniques that are used for each food handling area will depend on what is to be cleaned and how often it is to be cleaned. The cleaning requirements should be set out in writing in the cleaning schedule for each particular area.

The cleaning schedule should describe:

- How to clean the different surfaces in food handling areas.
- The minimum times that they must be cleaned.
- When they must be cleaned.

The cleaning schedule will also identify:

- The cleaning tools that are to be used when performing the cleaning tasks.
- The chemicals and detergents (together with dilution rates) that must be used.

It is important to note that food handling areas can be cleaned more frequently than the minimum requirements that are stated in a cleaning schedule.

Spillages should be cleaned immediately.

Food handling areas are busier during meal periods such as breakfast, lunch and dinner. Most food handling areas - such as shopping centre food courts - will be busiest at lunch time.

1.3 Hygiene and the law

- The "Australia New Zealand Food Standards Code" was developed to provide a set of national standards for the manufacture and handling of food in Australia.
- Codes of practice in each state are regulated by relevant state food authorities and/or Departments of Health.
- A business, which makes and handles food, must be registered with their relevant state authority.
- A business which makes and handles food is monitored by local government (council) health inspectors, who will inspect the food handling business on an annual or more regular basis depending upon the type and size of the food business.
- Sometimes, you may be unsure of what the legislation requires you to do, or you may have a hygiene problem that you cannot fix. All hygiene issues represent a potential health risk in a food establishment. Therefore, any hygiene issue that you become aware of must be immediately reported to your supervisor for action.
Customers rely on food staff to not only provide a clean environment, but also to ensure that food is safe to eat.

Customers expect that:

- You (staff) are clean.
- The food service area (food court) is clean and safe.

You must follow all workplace hygiene procedures because they are legal requirements of the business that you work for.

These laws place a great responsibility on anyone who is handling food in a food business.

They are there to ensure food remains ‘safe’ for your customers to eat.

### 1.4 What is a food safety program?

A food safety program identifies potential food safety hazards (hazards that can lead to food poisoning) that may occur in your workplace.

A food safety program outlines the food safety procedures that must be followed to prevent food poisoning. It also documents how these procedures meet legal requirements.

A food safety program does the following:

- Identifies where and how each hazard can be controlled (that is all the different ways someone could get food poisoning – i.e. keep areas clean and dispose of rubbish and report pests (insects, rats etc.)
- Describes how these controls are to be monitored.
- Describes the corrective action required if control conditions are not met – i.e. what should happen if an area is difficult to keep clean and how will you improve the cleaning.
- Identifies records that must be kept.

Cleaning is a very important part of every food safety program.

### 1.5 Food Hazards and food handling principles

Safe food handling is based on two (2) key principles.

- You are responsible for preventing food being contaminated.
- You are responsible for controlling bacteria from growing in food.

These two (2) principles are the basis of safe food handling practices that you are required to follow in your workplace.

Whilst this course is not specifically designed to cover food handling, it is a requirement to understand potential food safety hazards that can lead to food poisoning.

These two (2) principles are the key to maintaining the hygiene of food and to preventing an outbreak of food poisoning.
1.6 How does food become contaminated?

Food can be contaminated by physical objects, chemicals, or bacteria transferred to food either through poor food handling practices, poor cleaning practices or from another food source. This is known as cross-contamination.

Physical contamination

Physical contamination is caused by foreign objects entering food during the food preparation and service process, and generally results in an injury rather than an illness. Physical contamination can come from a number of sources and can include items such as:

- Glass fragments from broken glass containers or ceramic cups etc.
- Dust from poor cleaning practices that falls into food
- Metal shavings from slicers and mincers
- A band-aid falling into food
- Pest infestation.

Chemical contamination

Chemical food poisoning is caused by the presence of toxic chemicals in food. Examples of chemicals that may contaminate food include: pesticides, insecticides, rat poison and cleaning chemicals.

Always make sure that chemical residues are removed from food contact surfaces.

1.7 Bacterial contamination

Your food handling practices should ensure that food is not exposed to any food safety hazards. Poor handling practices can result in food being contaminated by bacteria. People, animals or pests can all cause bacterial contamination. Examples of how this could occur include:

- Poor personal hygiene, such as a food handler coughing or sneezing over food OR not washing hands after eating or using the toilet
- Food not being protected during self-service, such as salad bars not having sneeze screens
- Self-service, such as a buffet not being supervised
- Pest infestations - poor cleaning and waste removal
- Poor storage practices resulting in food being open to contamination
- Animals on food premises.
1.8 Cross-contamination

Cross contamination occurs when bacteria and viruses are transferred from a contaminated surface to one that is not contaminated. The bacteria and viruses can come from people, work surfaces or equipment, and other foods.

For example, cross contamination can happen when bacteria from the surface of raw meat, poultry and raw vegetables are transferred onto ready-to-eat food, such as green salads, rice or pasta salads, cooked meats or poultry or even fruit.

The bacteria on the raw food are killed when the food is cooked, but the ready-to-eat food gets eaten without further cooking – bacteria and all.

Hands are among the obvious culprits in transferring bacteria from raw to ready-to-eat food, but direct contact with raw foods, dirty chopping boards, knives and other cooking implements can also spread the contamination.

Chopping boards, plates and knives that have been in contact with raw food must be washed and sanitised, then rinsed and thoroughly dried before being used for ready-to-eat foods.

Cross contamination involves a number of stages of the food handling process and in particular from a breakdown in cleaning procedures.

Cross contamination can be reduced by using good hygiene practices, including:

- Washing and sanitising all equipment including utensils, knives, chopping boards and work surfaces before and after use when preparing different foods.
- Washing hands in between preparation tasks.
- Changing single-use gloves after handling raw foods.
- Using a clean utensil each time food is tasted.
- Minimising contact with food wherever possible by using utensils or single-use gloves.
- Not storing raw foods above cooked foods.
Section 2 – Assess cleaning requirements for food handling area

When you finish this section you will have an understanding of the following concepts and ideas:

2.1 Identifying WHS (Work, Health and Safety) hazards
2.2 Maintaining a clean workplace
2.3 Cleaning and sanitising
2.4 Cleaning techniques
2.1 Identifying WHS (Work, Health and Safety) hazards

The identification of WHS hazards in all aspects of work should be approached by:

- Walking around the workplace and looking at what could cause harm.
- Consulting workers about any problems that they have encountered.
- Examining systematically all aspects of the work; that is, looking at what actually happens in the workplace or during the work activity. Actual practice may differ from workplace procedure manuals.
- Taking account of unplanned but foreseeable events, such as interruptions to the work activity.
- Considering long-term hazards to health, such as exposure to harmful substances.
- Looking at company accident and ill-health records.
- Seeking information from other sources, such as: manufacturers’ and suppliers’ instruction manuals or safety data sheets. (This will also allow equipment to be checked for operational effectiveness and to be adjusted safely).

**Good housekeeping** is a simple preventative measure which may be overlooked. For example; immediately cleaning up spills will minimise exposure to toxic chemicals and prevent slips and falls.

2.2 Maintaining a clean workplace

Clean working conditions are essential in preventing growth of micro-organisms (bacteria) to reduce/eliminate food safety hazards.

Your responsibility is to make sure that all food service areas are kept clean according to good hygiene practices.

Not only do health requirements demand this, but food businesses also want their customers to know that you are maintaining the highest of standards in cleanliness.

2.3 Cleaning and sanitising

Cleaning and sanitising procedures aim to reduce and/or eliminate bacteria that could lead to food contamination and food poisoning.

Cleaning is the process of removing dirt and soil from surfaces and equipment. Sanitation is the process of reducing micro-organisms to a safe level.

- All surfaces in a kitchen and food service areas need to be kept clean.

It is important to understand the difference between cleaning and sanitizing.

**Cleaning** is the process of removing food and other types of soil from surfaces or equipment, such as bench-tops, counter-tops, tables and chairs.

Cleaning also includes removing food and beverage spills, disposing of waste, removing reusable items for dishwashing and wiping surfaces with a neutral detergent.

However, when cleaning public areas such as a food court, there is no requirement to use a sanitiser after cleaning because these surfaces are not food contact surfaces.
**Sanitizing** is the process of reducing the number of microorganisms (bacteria) on a surface to safe levels so it will not cause food contamination.

To be effective, cleaning and sanitizing must be a two-step process. Surfaces must first be cleaned and rinsed before being sanitized. All food-contact surfaces must be washed, rinsed and sanitized in the following situations:

- After each use.
- Any time you begin working with another type of food.
- Any time you are interrupted during a task and the tools or items you have been working with may have been contaminated.
- At four-hour intervals, if the items are in constant use.

### 2.4 Cleaning techniques

The cleaning techniques will vary significantly depending upon the type of surface or equipment being cleaned. Some of the most common procedures include:

- Cleaning dining/food service areas with a neutral detergent. Soils are mostly limited to food and beverage spills.
- Floors may require different cleaning techniques and chemicals depending upon the type of floor and area being cleaned. Dining room floors should be cleaned with a neutral detergent. Kitchen floors may require the use of a degreasing chemical to remove build-up of oils and greases.
- Walls should be cleaned with a neutral detergent. Where heavy grease build-up may be present a degreasing chemical may be required to breakdown greasy films.
- Cooking equipment will often require a heavy duty degreaser to remove heavily soiling. Care should be taken when using heavy duty degreasing chemicals.
Section 3 – Select cleaning equipment and chemicals

When you finish this section you will have an understanding of the following concepts and ideas:

3.1 Protective clothing and equipment
3.2 Colour coding
3.3 Cleaning equipment
3.4 Cleaning Chemicals (Detergents)
3.5 Chemical Sanitizing

Click "next" to continue.
3.1 Protective clothing and equipment

Suitable clothing and protective clothing
All uniforms must be kept clean and tidy.
The way you look reflects the image and standard of the establishment because when you are dealing with customers - you are the establishment.
In addition, some employees may be required to wear protective clothing to reduce the risk of injury/accident.

Table bussing and front-of-house staff
All front-of-house staff must wear clothing that is suitable to the environment and working conditions. Almost all front-of-house staff will be required to wear a nominated uniform.
For safety reasons, avoid anything that is loose fitting and flowing, as it could easily catch in a machine or on a piece of equipment.
Hair should be tied back unless advised otherwise. In some cases, wearing a hair net may be necessary.

Additional personal protective equipment (PPE)
You may be required to wear additional personal protective equipment (PPE) to perform some aspects of your work, such as using hazardous chemicals to clean the kitchen, bar, housekeeping and other areas.
Your workplace WHS policies and procedures and/or your supervisor will provide information on the use of PPE.
PPE may include:
- Gloves to protect the skin against biological and chemical hazards
- Glasses, goggles and face shields to protect the eyes and face
- Slip resistant, enclosed shoes
- Staff uniforms appropriate to the work environment.

3.2 Colour coding

The risk of spreading germs can be reduced by using colour coded cleaning cloths, mops and buckets. Colour coding is frequently used in health and aged care settings and some larger commercial kitchens.
The idea of colour coding is to use different coloured cleaning cloths, mops and buckets based on the type of area being cleaned. Colour coding cloths, mops and buckets follow the principals below:
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Color</th>
<th>Area Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>RED</td>
<td>Bathroom and toilets (Toilets and Bathrooms)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BLUE</td>
<td>Low risk general use public areas such as offices, hallways, stairs, lobbies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GREEN</td>
<td>Kitchen and food and beverage areas</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>YELLOW</td>
<td>Cleaning of infectious areas and contaminated fluids</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

3.3 Cleaning equipment

Cleaning is easier when you have the right tools at hand.

For example, worn-out tools will not give you the pressure or friction needed for cleaning, and tools that are the wrong size will be ineffective.

Keep tools used for cleaning separate from those used for sanitizing.

Keep tools used for cleaning food-contact surfaces separate from those used to clean non-food-contact surfaces.

**Brushes**

Brushes apply more effective pressure than wiping cloths, and the bristles loosen soil more easily.

Brushes come in different shapes and sizes for each task.

Plastic brushes with synthetic bristles are preferred. They do not absorb moisture, are nonabrasive, and last longer.

**Scouring Pads**

Steel wool and other abrasives are sometimes used to clean heavily soiled pots and pans, equipment, or floors. However, metal scouring pads can break apart and leave residue on surfaces, which can later contaminate food.

Nylon scouring pads can provide an alternative.

**Mops and Brooms**

Keep both light-duty and heavy-duty mops and brooms on hand.

Mop heads can be all-cotton or synthetic blends.
3.4 Cleaning Chemicals (Detergents)

Cleaning chemicals are used to break down greases and oils for removing them from surfaces. Cleaning chemicals must only be used as directed on the label. Some kitchen detergent such as dish-washing machine detergents, are hazardous and can cause severe burns to the skin.

Detergents

There are different types of detergents for different types of cleaning jobs. All detergents contain chemicals that can quickly penetrate and soften the soils, and dissolve greases and oils.

**General purpose detergents** are neutral to mildly alkaline and are used to clean fresh soil from floors, walls, ceilings, prep surfaces, and most equipment and utensils.

**Heavy-duty detergents** are highly alkaline (corrosive) and are used to remove greases, oils, aged or dried soil and baked-on grease. Ware-washing detergents also are highly alkaline.

**Degreasers** are alkaline detergents containing grease-dissolving agents and often contain a large amount of corrosive alkalis. These cleaners work well in areas where grease has been burned on, such as grill backsplashes, oven doors, and range hoods. These chemical are hazardous and can cause severe burns.

**Acid Cleaners** are used on mineral deposits and other soils that alkaline cleaners cannot remove. These cleaners are often used to remove scale in ware-washing machines. The type and strength of the acid varies with the cleaner's purpose. Follow the instructions carefully and use acid cleaners with caution.

**Abrasive Cleaners** contain a scouring agent like silica that helps scrub off hard-to-remove soil. These cleaners are often used to remove baked-on food in pots and pans or cleaning stainless steel sinks. Use abrasives with caution since they can scratch surfaces.

Sanitizing

There are two methods used to sanitize surfaces: heat sanitizing and chemical sanitizing. Which you use depends on the application.

**Heat Sanitizing:** The higher the temperature, the shorter the time required to kill microorganisms (bacteria).

The most common way to heat-sanitize tableware, utensils, or equipment is to use a commercial dishwashing machine. A thermometer should be used to check water temperature when heat sanitizing. Sanitising temperatures must be above 75 degrees Celsius and soaked for a minimum of 30 seconds at this temperature.
3.5 Chemical Sanitizing

Chemical sanitizers are widely used in establishments because they are effective, reasonably priced, and easy to use.

The three most common types of sanitizers are: quaternary ammonium compounds (quats), chlorine and hydrogen peroxide.

Factors Influencing the Effectiveness of Sanitizers

Different factors influence the effectiveness of chemical sanitizers. This includes: contact time, temperature, and concentration.

Contact Time: In order for a sanitizing solution to kill microorganisms, it must make contact with the object for a specific amount of time. Since minimum times may differ for each sanitizer, check with your supplier. As a general guideline the contact time should be 10 minutes or longer.

Concentration: Chemical sanitizers are mixed with water until the proper concentration - ratio of sanitizer to water - is reached.

Concentration is measured using a sanitizer test kit and is expressed in parts per million (ppm). Chemical manufacturers will often test these concentrations for you when they visit.

If the chemical is not strong enough then it may not sanitise properly.

Surfaces must first be cleaned and rinsed before being sanitized

To be effective, cleaning and sanitizing must be a two-step process. Surfaces must be cleaned and rinsed before being sanitized.
Section 4 – Prepare for cleaning

When you finish this section you will have an understanding of the following concepts and ideas:

4.1 Personal hygiene
4.2 Policies regarding eating, drinking, chewing gum, and smoking
4.3 Washing your hands at appropriate times

Click "next" to continue.
4.1 Personal hygiene

A major cause of food poisoning is the lack of personal hygiene practised by food handlers.

All personal hygiene requirements and regulations must be followed.

Failure to follow just one rule can (and has) led to massive outbreaks of food poisoning causing not only loss of trade and jobs at the venue, but also deaths.

Personal hygiene is a serious issue and must be treated as such. The food industry simply cannot afford to tolerate workers who treat this area of responsibility as a joke.

An outbreak of food poisoning traced back to you is no laughing matter. The personal hygiene rules are:

- **No jewellery to be worn on hands and wrists**: food can lodge in the jewellery, deteriorate and then fall back into food.

- **Facial hair must be kept neat and controlled**: hair should either be covered or sprayed to keep it controlled in such a way that hairs do not fall into food, and long hair must be tied back (this is applicable to waiting staff as well as food preparation and food service staff).

- **Fingernails must be short** (use a nail brush to clean under them as bacteria love hiding there), clean and free of polish: cracked fingernails and chipped nail polish can harbour bacteria and may also flake off into food.

- **Clothing must be clean**: a minimum requirement is for clean clothes for each shift.

- **Cuts and sores must always be covered**: a proper, coloured, waterproof dressing must be applied and a finger stall used where necessary.

- **Not handling food when sick with a common cold**: food handlers in the acute state of a common cold must not handle food.

- **Food handlers with any other communicable disease**: workers in this category must not deal with food until they receive a certificate from a doctor stating that they are cleared to work with food.

- **General personal cleanliness**: in addition to following proper hand-hygiene practices, food handlers must maintain personal cleanliness. Food handlers should bathe or shower before work.

4.2 Policies regarding eating, drinking, chewing gum, and smoking

Small droplets of saliva can contain thousands of disease-causing microorganisms.

In the process of eating, drinking, chewing gum, or smoking, this saliva can be transferred to the food handler’s hands or directly to the food they are handling.

For this reason, food handlers must not smoke, chew gum or tobacco, or eat or drink while preparing or serving food, while in food preparation areas, or in areas used to clean utensils and equipment.

Some jurisdictions allow employees to drink from a covered container with a straw while in these areas. Check with your local regulatory agency. Food handlers should eat, drink, chew gum, or smoke only in designated areas, such as an employee break room.
4.3 Washing your hands at appropriate times

Health authorities believe that the single most important way to prevent food poisoning outbreaks is for food handlers to wash their hands properly.

You can easily see dirt, but you can’t easily see germs.
Are they clean? No obvious sign of dirt, but what about germs? Just because you can’t see germs doesn’t mean that they aren’t there. They are invisible to the naked eye.

How do germs get onto your hands?
Everything you touch is capable of transferring germs onto your hands - but especially dirty items, sores, pets, used handkerchiefs and tissues and the things you touch when you go to the toilet.

How do you wash your hands?
1. Rub hands together well to build up a good lather with soap, the suds help to float germs away. Don’t forget between your fingers and under your nails. You might have to use a brush.
2. Rinse well in warm water.
3. Dry your hands thoroughly. Touching surfaces with moist hands encourages germs to spread from the surface to your hands.

Getting rid of most germs is simple - wash & dry your hands.
Always wash & dry your hands:
• Before starting work
• Before touching or eating food
• After touching raw meat, fish or chicken
• After using the toilet
• After having a break
• After handling and removing waste (rubbish)
• After blowing your nose.
Section 5 – Cleaning food handling and food service areas

When you finish this section you will have an understanding of the following concepts and ideas:

5.1 Creating a cleaning schedule
5.2 Sample cleaning schedule
5.3 Monitoring the cleaning program
5.4 Cleaning and preparing tables and public areas
5.5 Cleaning spills in food service areas
5.6 Waste disposal
5.1 Creating a cleaning schedule

The following are some basic steps for designing and implementing a cleaning program.

- Identify all surfaces, tools, and equipment in the facility that needs cleaning.
- Look at the way cleaning is done currently.
- Estimate the time and skills needed for each task. Some jobs may be done more efficiently by two or more people. Others might require an outside contractor. Determine how often things need to be cleaned.

The above information is used to develop a **master cleaning schedule** (see table below). The schedule should be organized by area and list the items that need to be cleaned and how often. There should be a brief description for each cleaning task explaining how to do the job and who is responsible by job title. The schedule should include the following:

- **What should be cleaned?** Cleaning schedules should be arranged in a logical way so nothing is left out. List all cleaning jobs in one area, or list jobs in the order they should be performed. The schedule should be flexible enough so that changes can be made if needed.

- **Who should clean it?** All cleaning tasks should be assigned to a specific individual(s). In general, staff should clean their own areas of responsibility and rotate other cleaning tasks according to the schedule.

- **When it should be cleaned?** All staff working in food handling areas should clean as they go, and clean and sanitize at the end of their shifts, if they are cleaning food contact surfaces. Major cleaning tasks such as cleaning oven and grills should only be carried out when food will not be contaminated, usually after closing.

- **How it should be cleaned?** Clearly written procedures should be provided for all cleaning in food handling areas. Always follow manufacturers’ instructions when cleaning kitchen equipment.
5.2 Sample cleaning schedule

Below is a sample cleaning schedule for a food preparation area. We first looked at this schedule in section (1).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>What to clean</th>
<th>When to clean</th>
<th>How to clean</th>
<th>Who should clean</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Floors</td>
<td>Wipe up spills</td>
<td>Immediately</td>
<td>Cloth mop and bucket, broom and dustpan</td>
<td>Table Bussers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Damp mop</td>
<td>Once per shift, between rushes</td>
<td>Mop, bucket, safety signs</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Scrub</td>
<td>Daily, at closing</td>
<td>Brushes, squeegee, bucket, detergent, safety signs</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Strip, reseal</td>
<td>Every 6 months</td>
<td>Check written procedure</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Walls and Ceilings</td>
<td>Wipe up splashes</td>
<td>As soon as possible</td>
<td>Clean cloth, detergent</td>
<td>Dishwashing staff</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Wash walls</td>
<td>Food-prep and cooking areas: daily</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>All other areas: first of month</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Worktables</td>
<td>Clean and sanitize tops</td>
<td>Between uses and at the end of day</td>
<td>See cleaning procedure for each table</td>
<td>Prep cooks</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Empty, clean, and sanitize drawers</td>
<td>Weekly</td>
<td>See cleaning procedure for table</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

5.3 Monitoring the cleaning program

Once you have implemented the cleaning program, you must monitor it to make sure it is working. The monitoring process would normally be the responsibility of the workplace supervisor. Monitoring should include:

- Ensuring daily cleaning routines are completed.
- Reviewing the master schedule every time there is a change in procedures, or equipment. Make sure the cleaning program addresses any changes.
- Requesting employee input on the program during staff meetings. Ask employees if they need
additional equipment, supplies, manpower, time, or training to get cleaning jobs done. Find out if they have suggestions for improving the program.

- Conducting spot inspections.

5.4 Cleaning and preparing tables and public areas

Cleaning and preparing tables
You may be required to clean and prepare tables before opening hours, or during trade.

An initial check should be made to ensure that tables are safe and secure. The tables should be solid and not wobble - a check should also be made of chairs, other furniture and other aspects (electrical cords, frayed carpet) for safety.

Tables should be cleaned and, where necessary, a cloth may be laid.

If you are bussing tables in a food court or other large food service area, the table should be clear of any place mats, cutlery and plates. All table tops should be clean and streak free.

Cleaning public food courts
Your role in a food court is likely to be one of maintaining tidiness rather than performing any detailed cleaning and sanitising.

When working as a table busser in a food court your duties will include:

- Removing waste and cleaning tables when they are vacated (empty). This will include disposing of leftover foods, beverages, packaging and disposable utensils in the waste bin.
- Clearing re-useable plates, cutlery and trays and returning them to designated locations for washing.
- Wiping tables with a neutral detergent.
- Removing any waste from floors.
- Spot cleaning spills on floors.
- Emptying waste bins before they overflow and taking waste bags to designated location.
- Attending to any large spills as a matter of urgency to prevent someone from slipping on a wet or soiled floor.

5.5 Cleaning spills in food service areas

There is always the potential for a guest - or staff member - to be injured as a result of the cleaning. This is not just a bad public relations outcome, but it can mean a lengthy and expensive court case.

Barricading and signage must be put in position before any cleaning begins. “Slippery When Wet” signs must be used when mopping or working with/on a slippery surface.

There must be enough “Slippery when Wet” signs to provide warning to people who may enter the area from any direction.

The courts have left us in absolutely no doubt that we are responsible for people and worker safety.

We have a duty of care to maintain a workplace that does not pose a risk to people, and where we breach that duty - and injury results - we can expect severe penalties to follow.
5.6 Waste disposal

Health laws require a food handling operation to supply sufficient garbage containers to cater for whatever garbage is produced.

If the rubbish is scattered all around the existing bins, and it is flowing over the tops of bins, then there are not enough bins for the service area or the bins are not being removed as frequently as they should.

Frequency of disposal is different for every building and will depend upon the time of day. Lunch hours in shopping centres (12-2pm) are the busiest period and will require frequent removal of rubbish.

The garbage area must be kept in a clean and tidy condition. In general, there is a requirement that garbage be stored in such a way as to minimise contamination.

All garbage bins must be in good condition. They must also be fitted with tight-fitting lids which must be kept in position so as to provide protection against pests getting into the rubbish.

Garbage bins are required by legislation to be cleaned. They must be regularly cleaned using brushes and cleaning utensils dedicated solely to that task, and using some form of degreaser to cut through the grease, and a deodorant to control smells.

Recycled Waste

Food courts generate a lot of waste and most food courts provide recycling bins for food and beverage packaging. Plastic and glass bottles and aluminium cans are disposed in separate bins for recycling.

Food packaging and food waste are normally disposed of in the general waste bin.
Section 6 – Clean and store equipment

When you finish this section you will have an understanding of the following concepts and ideas:

6.1 Cleaning Tools and Supplies
6.2 Dispose of used chemical solutions
6.3 Prepare for the next shift

Click "next" to continue.
6.1 Cleaning Tools and Supplies

Cleaning tools and supplies should be cleaned before being put away. If they are used for cleaning food preparation areas they must be cleaned and sanitised before they are stored.

Tools and chemicals should be stored in a locked area away from food and food-preparation areas. The area should be well lighted so employees can identify chemicals easily.

The storage area should be equipped with hooks for hanging mops, brooms, and other cleaning tools, a utility sink for filling buckets and cleaning tools, and a floor drain.

Never use hand-washing sinks, food-preparation sinks, or ware-washing sinks to clean mops, brushes, or tools. When storing tools and supplies, consider the following suggestions:

- Air-dry wiping cloths overnight.
- Hang mops, brooms, and brushes on hooks to air-dry. Do not leave brooms or brushes standing on their bristles.
- Clean, rinse, and sanitize buckets. Let them air-dry, and store them with other tools.

6.2 Dispose of used chemical solutions

Once you have finished using a diluted chemical solution, dispose of it safely.

- Never pour it back into its original container. If you do this you may transfer soil and bacteria to the concentrated chemical.
- Some chemicals, such as detergents, can be poured down a cleaners sink. Others, which may be harmful to the environment, need special disposal. They may need to be bottled and sent to an approved location.
- Always read the Safety Data Sheet (SDS) or the manufacturer’s instructions before disposing of chemicals.

6.3 Prepare for the next shift

Prepare all of the equipment so that it is ready for the next shift. It should be clean and in working order so that there is no risk of safety or hygiene problems for yourself or for others.

Make sure you do the following:

- Check cleaning equipment and report any faults.
- Check equipment is cleaned and stored properly.
- Check chemical containers for cracks or leaks; make sure they are closed properly and that you can easily read chemical labels.
- Dispose of waste chemicals, waste water and solid waste safely and according to company policy.
- Always wash gloves in warm water and detergent, and rinse thoroughly before removing them. Take them off and place them where they can dry easily.
- Always wash your hands well with detergent and warm water. Then rinse them in clean water and dry with a hand towel or hand dryer.