

HAND WASHING FACILITIES

FOOD SAFETY FACT SHEET



KEY POINTS

- Make sure hand wash basin have soap, paper towels and warm running water
- Don't block access to the hand wash basin
- Only use for washing hands

COMMON ISSUES

Hand wash basin is not easily accessible

The hand wash basin should be freely accessible by staff to wash their hands several times throughout the day, such as;

- Before and after handling raw meat
- Before commencing work
- After going to the toilet
- After smoking
- After coughing
- After sneezing
- After cleaning
- In between changing tasks e.g. after taking the rubbish out and before beginning wash up duties



A bench in front of the hand wash basin prevents staff freely accessing this basin to wash their hands.

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Hand wash basin is not supplied with warm running water, soap and disposable paper towels

- The hand wash basin should have plenty of warm running water, soap and paper towels for effective hand washing.
- Warm water assists in the removal of oils that can carry bacteria.
- Soap assists in the removal of oil and bacteria and should be lathered over the hands including palms, individual fingers, fingernails, and back of hands and wrists, for a duration of 20 seconds - an easy way to time this is to sing "Happy Birthday" twice.
- Disposable paper towels are the most effective way to dry your hands as they can then be disposed of as well as any bacteria that has been transferred to the towel - this transferal of bacteria is the reason why tea towels and hand towels are an ineffective option.



No paper towels in the dispenser means staff will dry their hands on unsuitable items such as tea towels, aprons, their clothing or worse choose not to wash their hands at all!

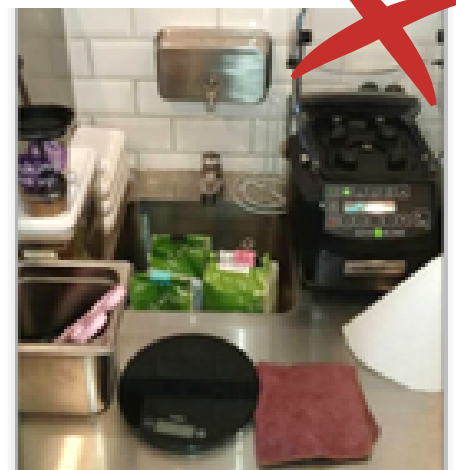
Hand wash basin is being used for other activities

The hand wash basin is solely for the use of washing hands, arms and the face. The washing of hands in sinks which are used for other activities creates a transfer of bacteria from the sink back to the hands, creating an ineffective hand washing solution.

No other items are to be store in or around the hand wash basin.

Common items seen in hand wash basins are:

- Food products
- Defrosting Food
 - Gloves
 - Utensils
- Food debris from discarded ingredients



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GOOD EXAMPLES

Good examples of hand wash basins are adequately supplied with warm running water, soap and disposable paper towels, they can be easily accessed by food handlers, and are used only for the purpose of hand washing.



Food Premise Assessment Report Questions

- Q. Food handlers wash and dry hands thoroughly using hand wash facilities -4*
 - Q. Food handlers wash hands before commencing/recommencing work and after: using the toilet, coughing, sneezing, smoking, handling raw meat, cleaning, etc. - 8*
 - Q. Hand washing facilities are easily accessible and used only for washing of hands, arms and face - 1
 - Q. Hand washing facilities have warm running water through single spout, single use towels and soap - 4, 8*
- Minor breach= 1 point; Major Breach = 4 points; Critical Breach = 8 points (1 critical breach results in an automatic fail).

Star Ratings and Scores

0-3 points = 5 Stars

4-8 points = 4 stars

9-15 points = 3 stars

Over 15 points (or 1 critical breach) is a failed inspection requiring further action.

These questions relate to the Standard 3.2.2 Food Safety Practices and General Requirements and Standard 3.2.3 Food Premises and Equipment both include hand washing requirements.

The hand washing requirements for food handlers are set out in Standard 3.2.2 Food Safety Practices and General Requirements. For further information on these requirements see the separate fact sheet Food Safety Standards - Health and Hygiene, Responsibilities of food handlers.

Under Standard 3.2.3 Food Premises and Equipment, businesses must provide hand basins that are easily accessible and located in the places where food handlers need to wash their hands, for example, in food preparation areas and near the toilets. Businesses must also make sure that the basins have a supply of clean warm running water.

In addition, under Standard 3.2.2 Food Safety Practices and General Requirements, businesses must make sure that the basins are supplied with soap or other cleaners and that staff can thoroughly dry their hands by using, for example, single-use cloths or paper towels. There must be a container for used towels if this is appropriate, and businesses must also make sure that the basins are not used for anything other than washing hands, arms and faces.