

**CHECKLIST FOR OPERATORS**

This checklist is designed to assist food business operators with reopening a food business that has been affected by storms and floods. Flood water can be contaminated with sewage, agricultural waste, industrial waste and other substances that can cause illness. There is a serious risk of food borne illness if contaminated or deteriorated food is consumed. These requirements are based on the Food Safety Standard 3.2.2 (Food safety practices and general requirements) and Food Safety Standard 3.2.3 (Food premises and equipment). It does not limit your legal responsibilities and obligations under the Food Act.

<b>AFTER THE STORM AND FLOOD EVENT - GENERAL SAFETY</b>	✓
Record the date/time that electricity services became unavailable	
Record the date/time that electricity services became available	
Check with emergency services that it is safe to return to the area where your food business is located. Only return once the site is cleared of any hazards and declared safe.	
You should not re-enter a premises without having a licensed electrician confirm the property is safe to enter.	
Notify someone (e.g. family or friend) that you are going to the premise and the time you expect to be there.	
Inspect the building for structural damage and note any obvious areas that should not be entered when inside.	
Ensure gas, electricity, water and sewerage services and equipment has been checked by the relevant authorities and licensed tradespeople before use.	
Make sure all gas and electricity is turned off while you clean up.	
Ensure all individuals take adequate precautions and wear suitable protective clothing when cleaning up. Always wear rubber gloves and water resistant clothing, including gumboots. You should also wear goggles or a face mask to protect your eyes from any splashing water and cover any open wounds before you start cleaning.	
Avoid unnecessary direct contact with affected foods, equipment and fixtures. This will help minimise injury or illness.	
Keep it clean! It's critical to practice basic hygiene. Regularly and thoroughly wash and dry your hands with soap using clean, drinking-quality water after clean-up activities. Use alcohol-based hand sanitiser to wash hands if the supply of drinking-quality water is limited.	
Allow for adequate ventilation in the premises by opening windows and doors.	
Be aware that floors will be slippery, even after water has receded.	
Watch out for snakes and vermin that may have entered the premise to escape floodwaters.	
<b>GENERAL CLEANING</b>	✓
Drain out the building as soon as possible. Check for trapped water and mud (e.g. within wall cavities and under large equipment and benches).	
Take photos and/or video footage of damaged contents before removing them from the premises.	
Clean out the building as soon as possible.	
Remove and discard all wet porous items that can't be easily cleaned (e.g. carpets, flooring, hollow doors, skirtings, architraves, cupboards, furniture, and insulation).	
Remove all mould growth with bleach. Disinfect where necessary. Whilst mould may continue to appear until the area is completely dry, it is important to keep on top of the appearance of mould to prevent the mould from spreading and any adverse health effects.	
Dry out the building as soon as possible. Weeks or even months may be required for materials to dry out thoroughly. Premature installation of floor coverings and wall linings can lead to mould development. Open all doors and windows. Increase airflow under the building (where possible). Use fans to speed up the drying out process.	

<b>FOOD AND FOOD PACKAGING</b>	✓
Keep the refrigerator and freezer doors closed as much as possible to maintain the cold temperature.	
Throw out all food that has been in direct contact with flood water. When in doubt, THROW IT OUT!	
Throw out all refrigerated perishable food (including dairy, meat, poultry and seafood) that has been left unrefrigerated or that has been stored above 50C for more than four hours.	
Throw out all frozen food after 48 hours of no power supply if the freezer is full or after 24 hours of no power supply if the freezer is only half full. If food has partially thawed, the food should be used as soon as possible.	
Throw out all food that has an unusual odour, colour or texture.	
Throw out all canned food where the can is open, swollen or damaged, or has a missing label.	
Throw out all packaged food (including drinks) that has been in direct contact with flood water. This includes packets, bags and containers with screw caps, snap-lids, crimped caps, twist caps, corks and flip top lids.	
Throw out all food packaging that has been in direct contact with flood water. This includes paper, cardboard and plastic containers/wrapping.	
<b>FITTINGS, FIXTURES, APPLIANCES, EQUIPMENT AND UTENSILS</b>	✓
Determine if each item (that has been in direct contact with flood water) can be salvaged or if it will need to be thrown out.	
Throw out all items (that have been in direct contact with flood water) that are made from porous material such as wood, particle board, some plastics, plastic laminate or rubber. This includes wooden and plastic chopping boards. When in doubt, THROW IT OUT!	
After an assessment by a licensed electrician, it may be possible to salvage and recondition equipment with water supply lines. This includes post-mix and beverage machines, coffee or tea urns, ice machines and dishwashers. Flush water supply lines, faucet screens and waterline strainers, and purge fixtures of any standing water. The interior and exterior surfaces of the unit should be thoroughly cleaned (using hot water and a detergent solution) and sanitized (using a disinfecting solution of one tablespoon of chlorine bleach per two litres of hot water). There should be no odour after reconditioning.	
An item can generally be salvaged if it is made of stainless steel or other non-absorbent material. Each item will need to be disassembled, thoroughly cleaned (using hot water and a detergent solution) then rinsed with a sanitising solution (using a disinfecting solution of one tablespoon of chlorine bleach per two litres of hot water). Only use drinking-quality (potable) water for cleaning activities in food premises.	
Items such as metal utensils, pots, pans and kitchen equipment pieces can be cleaned and sanitised by boiling them in water.	
Commercial and most domestic dishwashers are capable of sanitising utensils as part of their normal cycle. Ensure to use the normal cycle and not the "green" or "eco" cycle so that the operating temperature ensures effective sanitisation.	
After an assessment by a licensed electrician, it may be possible to salvage and recondition refrigeration and freezer units. The interior and exterior surfaces of the unit should be thoroughly cleaned (using hot water and a detergent solution) and sanitized (using a disinfecting solution of one tablespoon of chlorine bleach per two litres of hot water). Interior panels should be free of cracks or other damage. There should be no odour after reconditioning, and the units should be tested for temperature maintenance prior to being placed into service.	
<b>FOOD DISPOSAL</b>	✓
Ensure discarded food is not collected by consumers.	
<b>WASTE MANAGEMENT</b>	✓
Place all flood damaged goods in your waste bin and present for collection as usual. Alternatively please contact your waste contractor for an additional / emergency service.	
<b>REOPENING</b>	✓
Approval may be required from Council's Environmental Health Officer prior to reopening. Please contact council.	
Only sell food that is safe and suitable and only use drinking-quality (potable) water for activities on food premises.	
Continue to exercise basic food safety and hygiene practices.	

Your Name: ..... Signature: ..... Date: .....

For further information on this topic please contact:

**ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH SECTION, MAITLAND CITY COUNCIL ON 02 4934 9700**

