

Meals on wheels: Latest Food Safety News

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New partnership to support Meals on Wheels service organisations in New South Wales

The Meals on Wheels Association has commenced a partnership with a leading Australian food safety company to assist our members comply with the new Food Safety Program requirements of the New South Wales Food Authority. As you are no doubt aware, from October 2008, most Meals on Wheels services will be required to implement a Food Safety Program and this will be audited by the NSW Food Authority.

To assist members comply with the new requirements, we have taken the initiative to establish a food safety service which will be available to all association members in New South Wales. This will build on the food safety training that was conducted earlier this year by Edible Solutions. The food safety auditing and consulting services will be delivered through FISHER:KIDD & Associates. Some of you will no doubt have heard of FISHER:KIDD, a well known food safety company based in NSW, which specializes in assisting healthcare and food service organisations implement food safety programs. This project has been made available with funding from the Department of Ageing Disability and Home Care.

To support your organisation comply with the requirements of the NSW Food Authority we will be offering members the following four services:-

- Free Food Safety Pre-Compliance Audits
- Customised Food Safety Programs
- Food Safety Help Line
- Food Safety Corner on the NSW Meals on Wheels Association Web Site

Some services such as the food safety audit service, the web site and the help-line will be available free of cost. The new web site and phone help-line will be launched on November 1st to provide you with information on the new food safety standards and what is happening with the NSW Food Authority food safety audits.

There is however limited funding available for the free food safety audits, so the first services to book in will be able to benefit from the free audits. The Association has also negotiated with FISHER:KIDD to provide a low cost service to develop customised Food Safety Programs for Association members.

Does your service require a Food Safety Program?

Your service will require a written Food Safety Program if your service:-

- Processes or serves potentially hazardous food¹ to six or more vulnerable persons at any given time; or
- The principal activity is processing food into ready to eat food, including ready to eat potentially hazardous food, for service to six or more vulnerable persons at any given time (eg. central production kitchens); or
- The principal activity is processing food into ready-to-eat food or meals, including ready to eat potentially hazardous food, for delivery by a delivered meal organisation, and the processed food is for service to six or more vulnerable persons at any given time.

The Standard **doesn't apply** to a Meals on Wheels service if the service only delivers food. However, it is strongly recommended that all services implement a basic Food Safety Program as this will help make sure that your service is delivering safe food.

What is a Food Safety Program?

A Food Safety Program is a set of practices and procedures that can be used by Meals on Wheels organisations in order to ensure that the food is handled and the food you produce and/or deliver for clients is safe.

It is a requirement of the NSW Food Authority that your service has a Food Safety Program which contains the following key components:-

- ◆ There must be a written Food Safety Program which contains:
 - A description of the foods which the service produces;
 - A flow chart showing the steps that food goes through in your business (from receiving of ingredients or meals through to delivery or service);
 - A summary of the food safety hazards in the business (microbial, chemical and physical hazards);
 - A Food Safety Plan which summarises the controls for the food safety hazards;
- ◆ A food safety policy;
- ◆ Designated supervisors and workers responsible for specific jobs;

¹ For additional information on "potentially hazardous foods" refer to November: Frequently Asked questions

- ◆ Descriptions of all products handled by the business;
- ◆ Documented work instructions, procedures and schedules (for areas such as receiving, storage, personal hygiene and training, cleaning, chemical storage, pest control, washing up, waste, premises and equipment maintenance, equipment calibration etc.); and
- ◆ Forms for monitoring the control of hazards.

The NSW Food Authority will audit your business to ensure that there is evidence that your organisation has all of these aspects in place and that they are being followed daily will be regularly reviewed.

What are the benefits of a Food Safety Program?

Food Safety Programs are easy to implement and have many benefits.

A written Food Safety Program will:-

- Comply with the requirements of the NSW Food Authority;
- Prove that your Meals on Wheels service is keeping food safe at all stages of the process, from receiving meals or raw ingredients, cooking or reheating food through delivering and serving it to customers; and
- Help staff know what procedures to follow to keep food safe.

When is the deadline for having a Food Safety Program?

The NSW Food Authority will start auditing Meals on Wheels services which are required to have a food safety program (see above) in October 2008.

How the NSW Meals on Wheels Association is helping your organisation:

The NSW Meals on Wheels Association will be providing member organisations with a range of food safety services commencing in November. To support your organisation comply with the requirements of the NSW Food Authority we will be offering members the following four services:-

Service 1: Free Food Safety Pre-Compliance Audits

Service 2: Customised Food Safety Programs

Service 3: Food Safety Help Line

Service 4: Food Safety Corner on the NSW Meals on Wheels Association Web Site

Service 1: Free Food Safety Pre-Compliance Audits

Get ready for the NSW Food Authority food safety audits in 2008 by using the Association's *free* food safety auditing service, provided by FISHER:KIDD.

How? It's easy:-

Contact [Sue Heffernan](#) at the Association who will put you in touch with a FISHER:KIDD food safety auditor in your area.

Phone: [02. 82194227](tel:02.82194227)

Email: sueh@nswmealsonwheels.org.au

How long will an audit take?

The audit will take approximately 2 hours for a small service with minimal food production and up to 4 hours for a larger service with production. This audit will take place at a time that is convenient to your service. Audits will be conducted throughout New South Wales from November 1st. Where possible, services will be grouped together in regional areas to save travel costs.

What will the audit involve?

As part of the process a FISHER:KIDD auditor will:-

- ◆ Conduct the audit; and
- ◆ Write a full audit report.

During the audit FISHER:KIDD will follow the same requirements as the NSW Food Authority. FISHER:KIDD will check:-

- ◆ There is a written food safety program;
- ◆ There is a food safety policy;
- ◆ The business has designated supervisors and workers responsible for specific jobs;
- ◆ There are descriptions of all products handled by the business;
- ◆ There are documented work instructions and procedures;
- ◆ There are monitoring forms; and
- ◆ There are good hygiene practices – including cleaning, chemical storage, premises and equipment maintenance, equipment calibration, waste control, pest control, personal hygiene, training, receiving and storage procedures, product recall, internal reviews and customer complaint handling etc.

How much will the audit cost ?

The audit service is *free* for members of the NSW Meals on Wheels Association

NSW Meals on Wheels Association Food Safety Service 2: Customised Food Safety Programs

The NSW Meals on Wheels Association can assist your organisation develop a customised Food Safety Program through our food safety partner, FISHER:KIDD.

It's easy:-

Contact Isobel Kidd at FISHER:KIDD on 02.9817 0407 who will ask you to complete a simple questionnaire and will then create a fully customised Food Safety Program for your service.

How much?

FISHER:KIDD develop a customised Food Safety Program remotely

\$600

FISHER:KIDD visit your organisation and develop a Customised Food Safety Program

\$Price on application

NSW Meals on Wheels Association Food Safety Service 3:

Food Safety Help Line

The new food safety help line has been set up to assist services by providing access to a FISHER:KIDD food safety consultant to answer any food safety questions you may have. The service will operate **from** 10am – 3pm Monday to Friday (excluding public holidays). The help-line number is **1800 600 265**. **Alternatively you can send an email to a FISHER:KIDD consultant at ikidd@fisherkidd.com**

NSW Meals on Wheels Association Food Safety Service 4:

Food Safety Corner on the NSW Meals on Wheels Association web site

There is a new part on the NSW Meals on Wheels Association web site which focuses on food safety. The web site can be accessed through the NSW Meals on Wheels Association web site. On the web site there are food safety links to useful food safety web sites, updates the NSW Food Authority audits of Meals on Wheels services and contact details for the project. Each month there will be a featured article which includes; tips on complying with the NSW Food Authority audit requirements, training tips and fact sheets for training staff and volunteers, frequently asked questions and a "What's On" section featuring updates on the latest on food safety events and issues in NSW.