

GAS AND ELECTRICAL SAFETY IN CATERING PREMISES

Although serious incidents are rare, when there is a problem with gas or electrics there can be devastating consequences. However your premises or mobile catering unit is powered, by gas or electricity, employers have a duty to manage the risks. So what are the requirements? Here we go through **some** of the key requirements.

FIXED ELECTRICALS

Fixed electrical installations (the wiring and equipment between the supply meter and the point of use, e.g. socket outlets) should be tested and inspected periodically by a competent person to ensure that they are maintained in a safe condition.

For commercial premises, the recommended frequency is every five years and the report is called an Electrical Installation Condition Report.

ELECTRICAL

There is no legal requirement to have your portable appliances tested every year. However, the law does require an employer to ensure that their electrical equipment is maintained in order to prevent danger. Regular visual checks can help identify defects in appliances and equipment.



MAINS GAS

An emergency isolation valve (EIV) must be fitted in the gas supply and should be accessible by all staff. An emergency stop button/control button must be fitted if the EIV is not readily accessible. A notice must be displayed next to the EIV or emergency stop button.

GAS APPLIANCES



The installation, maintenance and repair work carried out on gas services and gas appliances must be carried out by a competent person; they must be Gas Safe registered and be qualified to work on commercial premises. You can check if your

gas engineer is registered at: www.gassaferegister.co.uk.

The gas flame to your appliances should be **blue**, unless specifically designed to be yellow (check the manufacturer's instructions to confirm this). All new gas appliances must be CE marked.

SOLID FUEL

Solid fuel appliances such as tandoori ovens, charcoal grills and wood-fired pizza ovens, can present a risk of exposure to carbon monoxide, which can kill. Only use equipment which is designed to be used with solid fuel and which is designed for indoor use. Ensure you have adequate ventilation and extraction. Extraction systems for commercial solid fuel appliances must be thoroughly examined and tested at least once every 14 months.

PORTABLE GAS

All commercial catering LPG equipment must have a flame failure device so that the gas supply will cut out if the flame is extinguished. All LPG catering equipment that has been made since 1995 must be CE marked. Gas cylinders must be secured in position and stored in an area where there is adequate high and low level ventilation.

HSE Catering Guides available from www.hse.gov.uk/catering/guidance including:

- Gas Safety in Catering
- Ventilation of Kitchens
- Preventing Exposure of Carbon Monoxide from Solid Fuel Appliances.
- Maintenance of Portable Electrical Equipment
- Safe Use of Propane and Butane Cylinders and Cartridges

See overleaf for gas and electrical safety top five tips.

GAS AND ELECTRICAL SAFETY - TOP FIVE TIPS

1. NEVER undertake work on gas or electrics unless you are competent to do so.
2. NEVER bypass a safety feature on an appliance – they are there for a reason!
3. The Health and Safety Executive website has lots of advice on maintaining safe electrics and gas in catering premises: www.hse.gov.uk
4. Have a plan for what to do in an emergency, whether it is a gas leak, electrical fire or otherwise. Make sure your staff know the plan too.
5. Smell gas? Switch off the appliance(s), ventilate the room, shut the emergency cut off valve off, leave the area and contact 0800 111999. For electrical emergencies contact your electricity supplier.

GLOBAL HANDWASHING DAY

We are celebrating global handwashing day (October 15th), an event dedicated to shining a spotlight on the importance of proper handwashing. Good handwashing practices can be one of the cheapest, easiest and most effective ways of protecting yourselves and your customers. UNICEF has estimated that ingraining the habit of washing hands with soap before and after using the toilet could save more lives than any other medical intervention.

A few horrible handwashing facts:

- 62% of men and 40% of women admit to not washing their hands after using the toilet.
- Bacteria can live on our hands for up to three hours.
- Wet hands can spread 1,000 times more germs than dry hands.
- Poor hand washing or lack of or inaccessible hand washing facilities at an inspection can severely affect your food hygiene rating!



Make sure any food handlers know the importance of good hand washing. Hot and cold (or appropriately mixed) running water, soap and hygienic hand drying facilities e.g. paper towel or air dryers, must be available at all wash hand basins.

KEEP UP TO DATE WITH FOOD SAFETY

The Food Safety pages on our website are being updated, with lots of new guidance available very soon. Future food safety and health and safety news, updates and events will be made available on our website at www.dover.gov.uk. We will also be sending out newsletters and targeted advice/alerts to businesses by email rather than post. This will be the last postal newsletter to be sent out.

To sign up to receive email alerts please go to the Dover District Council Website, click on 'Keep Me Posted' and opt in to the 'food safety' alerts.



The team will also be holding free training events, open to food businesses to attend. The training will look at those current changes or common problems found. The next event, on 12th January 2016 at 9.30am at the Whitfield Council Offices, will be looking at general hygiene requirements, managing allergens and pest control. If you would like to register your interest in attending, to suggest topics to include in a training event or on our website, or if you have other ideas of how we can help food businesses please email us at envhealth@dover.gov.uk.