

CLEANING AND SANITATION



Cleaning is the process of removing dirt, food debris, grease, residues and other objectionable matter.

Disinfection is the process of reducing germs to a safe level, e.g., bacteria and viruses. Sterilisation is a process that destroys all living organisms including their spores. It usually applies in medical situations and is not achievable in catering settings.



Cleaning effectively involves the use of detergents (a chemical or mixture of chemicals as a soap or synthetic substitutes). They act as a wetting agent to break up and lift greasy dirt and hold the dirt in suspension so that it can be rinsed away.

Disinfectants are used to reduce micro-organisms on food and hand contact surfaces, and equipment to a level that will not lead to harmful contamination or spoilage of food. Chemical disinfection must only be carried out after cleaning and rinsing. Otherwise, the disinfectant may not work.

Heat will also kill micro-organisms. Therefore, you can use very hot water as a disinfecting agent as long as it remains in contact with the item to be disinfected for a sufficient length of time, e.g., 82 °C for 30 seconds.

Adequate cleaning and disinfection procedures are considered critical to control cross-contamination of food by bacteria and to ensure food safety.



The critical areas to be disinfected are those that come into contact with food (tables, boards), hands (taps, handles) or items that can contaminate and allow bacterial multiplication (cloths, mops, bins).

You as the food business operator are responsible for the cleaning. Whilst it is your staff that may undertake the physical cleaning tasks, it is your responsibility to ensure that premises and their contents are capable of being effectively cleaned; Sufficient staff is available and enough time is allocated to ensure that cleaning tasks can be carried out; Staff are motivated, instructed, supervised, and controlled to carry out the cleaning tasks properly; Appropriate and sufficient materials and equipment are provided; Cleanliness standards are monitored on a regular basis.

CLEANING PRACTICES

All food and hand contact surfaces as work surfaces, chopping boards, food equipment, fridge handles, light switches, taps, doors, etc. within your food premises need to be disinfected.

When the same non-food surfaces such as worktops, sinks etc. are used at different times to prepare raw and ready-to-eat food, they must be cleaned and disinfected between uses and a two-stage process should be applied:

1. Physical removal with a detergent, of visible dirt, grease, film, or solid matter, followed by a thorough rinse to ensure the removal of all residues before moving to stage 2.
2. Use of a disinfectant, following the manufacturer's instructions for dilution, contact times and rinsing.

Cleaning schedule, instruction, supervision and checking to ensure that a plan is followed should be in place including the following safety precautions:

- ▀ All cleaning chemicals are properly labelled.
- ▀ Chemicals are not mixed as they may react together and give off a toxic gas.
- ▀ Chemicals are stored in a secure area away from food and used following the instructions on how to handle spillages of cleaning products and using personal protective equipment if required.



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