

Important information
for food businesses



Food and Safety Newsletter

Autumn 2008

What's Your Score?

Important information regarding Spelthorne's Scores on the Doors scheme – launch date. **The public will see it soon!**

Further to our previous letter to you in May 2008 we write to confirm that the Council's 'Scores on the Doors' scheme will be live to the public from the 13 October 2008. As previously advised this will display details of the food hygiene rating that currently applies to your food business.

We are providing food business proprietors access to the database **one month in advance** of the official public launch in order to provide an opportunity for you to check the entry for your business.

As of Monday 15 September 2008 you will be able to go to the Scores on the Doors website at www.scoresonthedoors.org.uk. Upon entering the site and selecting FIND A BUSINESS you will be presented with the following screen. After accepting a disclaimer, you can search for your own business as below.

You will not be able to view this through the Spelthorne Council's website search criteria until 13 October when it becomes live to the public.

Note that when the site is officially launched, it will be available at www.spelthorne.gov.uk.

Please do take some time to check the information on your business. In particular check the name, the description (i.e. type of business) address and telephone number. The website also allows people to view the location of your business on a map. This works using post codes and therefore is also worth checking to see that it is working properly for you. If there are any problems with the details of your business as shown on the website then please contact us as soon as possible in order that any final changes can be arranged.

Proprietors of a food business are able to add a picture of their premises or have a website link added. This is done via the scores on the doors website. Once the Council has reviewed any pictures or website links, they will be displayed as part of your listing. Please note the required picture format i.e. GIF/JPEG, Max 640x480 pixels. For help please contact us on **01784 446291** or e-mail environmental.health.commercial@spelthorne.gov.uk.

A further feature of the website is the 'Right to Reply'. This allows proprietors to register via the website comments in relation to their score. For example proprietors will be able to indicate any changes made and say whether they have completed any legal requirements highlighted at the food hygiene inspection.

To add a photo, web address go to the page with details about your premises and click on the link that states: **If you are the proprietor of this establishment and would like to add a picture of your premises or have a website link added, you can submit these for approval.**

To submit a right to reply, go to the page with details about your premises and click on the link that states: **If you are the proprietor of this establishment feel free to exercise your right to reply.**

You will have a right of reply during the pre-launch period. Please note however that any comments submitted on-line will only be displayed after it has been checked by the Council.

Please note that we will be issuing certificates which will show a businesses star rating. These are to be sent to food business owners after the launch period.

I hope that you will find this guidance helpful however if you are unsure about anything included in this article, or if you want further advice on improving food hygiene standards, then please contact us on **01784 446291** or e-mail environmental.health.commercial@spelthorne.gov.uk.

10 ideas for raising your 'Scores on the Doors'

Spelthorne Council will be running a '0 to 5 stars' Scores on the Doors scheme (where 0 stars are the worst and 5 stars the best in terms of standards of food hygiene). We will provide an opportunity for certain businesses (**i.e. those rated two stars or less**) to improve their star rating. However, you must convince our officers that standards of food hygiene at the premises have got better.

The ideas below indicate the type of things you must do to improve your score:

1. Adopt and implement a written food hygiene management system e.g. Safer Food, Better Business.
2. Train your staff in food hygiene.
3. Keep your premises and equipment clean and well maintained.
4. Store food at appropriate temperatures, e.g. ready to eat foods must be stored at temperatures no higher than 8°C, but preferably at 5°C.
5. Have a stock control system to ensure that food is date labelled, and dispose of any food which is out of date.
6. Ensure that food is cooked to adequate temperatures, e.g. hot food should be cooked to a core temperature of 75°C for 30 seconds.
7. Obtain your food from reputable suppliers, and protect it from contamination.
8. Keep your premises free of pests and store rubbish in suitable bins.
9. Keep records of checks you carry out in connection with food hygiene.
10. Properly supervise your staff and ensure that they have good personal hygiene.

Please note: Our Officers will only visit businesses **once** following a request for an improved star rating. You also need to be aware that on the visit your rating could get worse, stay the same or improve. This visit will normally take place after three months of us receiving your request.



Health and Safety News

Sensible health and safety!

Yes that's right, health and safety is about common sense. Not the myths some newspapers would have us believe such as: *"Elf and Safety" are banning Christmas decorations.*

It's a balance between what is practical, and what is possible, to protect people from real harm and suffering. Sensible health and safety is about saving lives, not stopping them.

European Campaign



October sees a European campaign on sensible risk management. You can obtain a campaign action pack now by contacting hsebooks@prolog.uk.com, quoting **MISC837**, with the following information: Your name, company, address and number of packs. Or phone

HSE books on 0800 0850050 or fax 01787 313995.

What should you be doing?

- have you looked at the health and safety risks in your business to you, your employees and others (eg visitors)?
- if you employ more than five people have you written down the findings of your assessment, and the controls necessary to reduce the risks?
- have you let your employees know about your assessment and the risk controls?



Do you want advice on risk assessments?

We have free leaflets on how to carry out risk assessments, contact us and we will send you some. We can also offer you advice. Ring us on- **01784 446291**

The Health & Safety Executive (HSE) have details on their web site, and examples of risk assessments for different types of businesses at: www.hse.gov.uk

You can use these to help you identify, and control, the risks in your business. Further advice can be obtained from the HSE's advice line **0845 345 0055**.

Workers banned from putting up office Christmas decorations

Not so! - most employers provide staff with a step ladders to put up decorations, rather than using wheeled office chairs. Good health and safety is a common sense way of avoiding accidents.



Anything special you need to watch out for

The following areas may need special consideration: **(contact us for further advice)**

Employment of young persons.

Risk assessments are needed for those under 18 years old. School children (16 and younger) must have their work registered with the education authority. Their parents will need to be shown copies of the risk assessment.

Employment of new and expectant mothers.

You need to assess the risks to new & expectant mothers. Alternative work must be arranged where their current work poses special risks.

Noise

Do you have very loud music or very noisy machinery at your premises? New legislation has been brought in to protect employees from excessive noise that could cause injury. Further advice on noise and risk assessments can be obtained from us, or the HSE web site at www.hse.gov.uk/noise/musicound.htm or ring the HSE's advice line **0845 345 0055**

Slips and Trips

Free special packs **MISC773** are available on reducing the risks of injury caused by slips and trips. Contact us on **01784 446291** or HSE books for your copy.



Training

Under food hygiene law in the UK, food handlers must receive adequate supervision, instruction and/or training in food hygiene for the work they do. This applies to all food businesses and the proprietor of each business is responsible for ensuring that their business complies with the law. Before they start any work involving the handling of food, staff should receive induction training in the workplace to make them aware of food hygiene issues. Staff will also need further instruction suited to the type of work they do.

You and your staff might all have different training needs, so you should consider each member of staff individually. You might also need to make special arrangements for staff whose first language is not English and those who have learning difficulties or literacy problems.

Spelthorne Borough Council run accredited one day Level 2 Award in Food Safety in Catering courses. The cost of the course is £83 per person.

Course dates between now and the end of March 2009 are as follows:

16 October 2008 (Thursday)
18 November 2008 (Tuesday)
10 December 2008 (Wednesday)
14 January 2009 (Wednesday)
19 February 2009 (Thursday)
24 March 2009 (Tuesday)

If you wish to book a place, please contact Environmental Health on telephone number **01784 446291** or e-mail **environmental.health.commercial@spelthorne.gov.uk**.

The following agencies also run accredited courses:

Chartered Institute of Environmental Health
0207 928 6006

Royal Institute of Public Health
0207 580 2731

Royal Society for the Promotion of Health
0207 630 0121

Society of Food Hygiene Technology
01590 671 979

Remember to keep a record of any training undertaken by you or your staff, because environmental health officers might request to see these records when they visit your premises.

