

# Niagara Region Public Health Department Food Safety Program

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## Presentation Overview

- Public Health Mandate
- New Public Health Standards
- New Food Safety Protocol
- Food Safety In Niagara



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**PUBLIC HEALTH MANDATE**

**HEALTH PROTECTION AND PROMOTION ACT,  
R.S.O. 1990, c. H.7**

- FOOD PREMISES - R.R.O. 1990, Reg. 562
- COMMUNICABLE DISEASES — GENERAL - R.R.O. 1990, Reg. 557
- CONTROL OF WEST NILE VIRUS - O. Reg. 199/03
- PUBLIC POOLS – O. Reg 565
- PUBLIC SPAS – O. Reg 428/05
- RABIES IMMUNIZATION O.Reg 567
- COMMUNICABLE DISEASE O.Reg 557
- ORDERS UNDER SECTION 22.1 OF THE ACT - O. Reg. 166/03
- RECREATIONAL CAMPS - R.R.O. 1990, Reg. 568



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**Ontario Public Health  
Standards**

- Evidence based for public health planning and performance
- Encompass four main areas:
  1. Population Health Assessment
  2. Surveillance
  3. Research
  4. Knowledge Exchange

As well as:

- Program evaluation
- Performance Measurement



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# **13 Program Standards**

## **5 Program Areas**

- Chronic Disease and Injury Prevention
- Family Health
- Infectious Disease
- Environmental Health
- Emergency Response

All standards – Goal, Outcome, specific requirements



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## **Review Status**

- Currently entering phase 2 consultation process
- Due for release April 7, 2008
- Review & evaluation of 17 protocols  
Infectious Diseases & Environmental Health focus
- Includes Food Safety



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## Food Safety Protocol

- Food safety management system developed to prevent or reduce the burden of illness
- Authority: Section 7 HPPA
- Relevant Regulation: Ontario Regulation 562 – Food Premises



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## Food Safety Protocol Highlights

- Food Safety Management System
  - Hazard identification & risk based approach
  - Incorporates a risk level categorization
  - Inspection frequencies based on risk (3,2,1)
  - Inspections to incorporate HACCP principles, compliance with regulations, management consultation, education



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## Protocol Highlights cont'd

- Response to Food-Related Incidents
  - 24/7 On Call
  - Complaint investigation
  - Enforcement
  - Food recalls
  - Outbreak management
- Education & Training
- Reporting
  - Annual food safety audit report to MOHLTC



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## **Mandatory Health Programs and Services Guidelines, 1997**      **Ontario Public Health Standards, *Draft* 2007**

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| Introduction to the Standards          | Introduction to the Standards           |
| 3 General Standards                    | A Foundational Standard                 |
| 4 Program Standards (3 program areas): | 13 Program Standards (5 program areas): |
| •Chronic Diseases and Injuries         | •Chronic Disease and Injury Prevention  |
| •Family Health                         | •Family Health                          |
| •Infectious Disease                    | •Infectious Diseases                    |
|  | •Environmental Health (new grouping)    |
|  | •Emergency Preparedness (new)           |



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# Environmental Health

- Programs:
  - Rabies
  - Water Quality (recreational and potable)
  - Health Hazard Investigations
  - Vector Borne Diseases (West Nile Virus)
  - Infection Control (tattoo parlours, salons etc.)
  - Migrant Housing Inspections
  - **Food Safety**



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# FOOD SAFETY



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## Food Safety

- **Involves:**
  - Routine inspections of all public eating establishments, approximately 3,000
  - Routine inspections of all institutional facilities that serve food e.g. hospital cafeteria – 1,082
  - Re-inspections and public complaint investigations
  - Foodborne disease investigations
  - Food Handler Education

## Food Audit 2007

- 2, 797 food premises inspected
- 913 re-inspections for non compliance
- 15 tickets issued
- 13 premises ordered closed
- 1,177 foodhandlers certified by Niagara

## Computerized Database

- Implementation of 'Hedgehog' inspection reporting system in 2004
- First in Ontario, now in use in 14 Health Units
- Allows for more consistent and accurate inspection information
- Compliments Niagara Region Disclosure Program



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*"Dozens of these restaurants show histories of food safety problems, but are still permitted to serve food to unwitting diners without penalty or public knowledge."*

*"Unlike food outlets in cities such as Los Angeles, Chicago or Atlanta, which require by law to post inspection reports, Toronto restaurants are off the hook."*

## **DIRTY DINING**

Special Report Dirty Dining;  
City's health inspection system for restaurants  
a menu of failure and inaction, a Star investigation reveals;

Robert Cribb, Toronto Star, February 19, 2000



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NiagaraInfoDine

# NIAGARA INFO=DINE

In 2007, the Niagara Region Public Health Department introduced the 'NiagaraInfoDine' website. This program posts the results of inspections performed in all food establishments operating in the Niagara Region on the Niagara Region website

The website has many benefits for the public as well as food owners/operators. It is intended to improve food safety standards, reduce the risk of foodborne illness, and raise consumer awareness of food safety. These types of websites exist in other regions and have shown to improve compliance with food safety legislation and enhance food safety standards in food establishments.

Compliance with the regulation is a measure of the risk of foodborne illness and one food handling mistake in even the best operated food establishments can lead to food poisoning. Therefore, the operators of all retail food business establishments are responsible for knowing the risks associated with foodborne illness and for taking action in his/her establishment to minimize any risks. When a Public Health Inspector visits a retail food business establishment he/she assess if the operation meets the requirements of the Food Premises Regulation and a food safety inspection report is then completed. The report is posted to the internet on a timely basis and includes infractions found in any establishment, the date of inspection, the number of critical and non-critical infractions and the infraction details.



## NIAGARA INFO=DINE

Niagara Region  
Building Community, Building Lives.

**Municipality:** Niagara Falls

**Keyword:** [Search] [Reset Search]

Searching for Niagara Falls, and no keyword(s) (741 found)

**Select Establishment:** Lodge Near the Falls-Wedgewood Restaurant - 5234 Ferry St.

**Establishment Details:**

Facility	Lodge Near the Falls-Wedgewood Restaurant
Street Name / Number	5234 Ferry St
City, Prov., Postal	Niagara Falls ON L2G 1R5
Phone	(905) 374-7771

**Date(s) Inspected:** Apr 22, 2007; Feb 01, 2007; Dec 21, 2006

**Inspection Detail:** Actions / Consultation / Technical Assistance

Compliance Category	Description	Result
Food Safety (Critical)	Cold holding: 4°C (40°F) or less	Corrected at Time of Inspection
Sanitation, Design and Maintenance (Non-Critical)	Thermometers to verify food preparation and storage temperatures	Not in Compliance
Sanitation, Design and Maintenance (Non-Critical)	Mechanical dishwashing: Proper water temperature	Not in Compliance
Sanitation, Design and Maintenance (Non-Critical)	Sanitize test kit/thermometer readily available for verifying dishwashing and sanitizing temperatures	Not in Compliance
Sanitation, Design and Maintenance (Non-Critical)	Wiping cloths handled properly (sanitizing solution used)	Not in Compliance
Sanitation, Design and Maintenance (Non-Critical)	General housekeeping satisfactory	Not in Compliance

- Instructions:**
1. Select municipality
  2. Enter full/partial keyword
  3. Click search
  4. Select establishment
  5. Select inspection date
- [In Compliance](#)  
[Description Explained](#)  
[Definitions of Actions Taken](#)  
[Glossary of Terms](#)



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## Niagara Infodine

- Celebrated one year anniversary in March 2008
- To date over one millions hits to website recorded
- Next phase of website involves GIS mapping of all food establishments



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## **FOOD DISCLOSURE**

**Ontario Health Departments with  
Information Regarding Restaurant  
Inspections/Convictions**

*Lambton*

*City of Toronto*

*Region of Waterloo*

*Halton Region*

*Ottawa*

*Niagara Region*

*Durham Region*

*Region of Peel*

*City of Hamilton*

*York Region*

*Brant County*



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## Foodborne Disease Investigations

- Formation of Foodborne Investigation (FBI) team
- In 2007, 308 investigations of foodborne disease or consumer complaints
- Involved in one food recall (Hershey)



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# *Escherichia coli* O157:H7

## St. Catharines - June 2007



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## **Escherichia coli O157:H7**

### **Outbreak** **Summer 2007**

#### Action Taken

- Epidemiology link to Yaman Restaurant, St. Catharines
- 9 Confirmed, 48 probable/suspected cases
- Closure issued to Yaman Restaurant based on the epidemiological link
- Cross contamination due to lack of municipal water supply
- Charges pending



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# **FOOD HANDLER CERTIFICATION**



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# Food Handler Certification

## **Food Handler Training Protocol (January 1, 1998)** **Mandatory Health Programs and Services** **Guidelines**

- Requirement for health departments to offer the Food Handler Certification Course
- No provincial requirement for food premises operators to take the course, protocol suggests:
  - At least one certified food handler at every high and medium risk food premise (with three or more employees)
- Niagara Region Public Health currently offers the Food Handler Certification course with a 5 year expiration date



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## Food Handler Certification **COURSE CONTENT**

- Role of Local Health Department
- Public Health Legislation
- Food Handler Hygiene
- Food Premises Sanitation, Design and Maintenance
- Food Allergy Emergency Procedure
- Safe Handling, Preparation and Storage
  - Pathogens
  - Foodborne Illness  
Factors such as: time/temperature abuse, cross contamination, improper cleaning & sanitizing, lack of personal hygiene
  - Food Supply
  - Adverse reactions to food
  - Food Preparation Storage  
Refrigeration, freezing, thawing, cooking, reheating, hot holding temperatures, thermometer use



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# Is the Food Handler Certification Course Effective?

*“Study group had significantly higher scores than the control group.”*

*“Positive correlation between food handler training/certification and either knowledge or behaviour.”*

Eby, A., Scott, F., Eyles, J., Harding-Cruz, S., Hall, R., Hunter, B., (May 26th, 2001), Is there evidence to recommend mandatory certification of food handlers?, Public Health and Epidemiology Report Ontario (PHERO), 12, 5, 172 – 175.



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## UPCOMING MANDATORY Food Handler Certification

### CANADA

#### ONTARIO PERSPECTIVE

- Toronto Public Health
  - By-law 678-2006, section 2(17)
  - requires a certified food handler in a supervisory position to be present when the food premises is in operation
- Hamilton Public Health
  - By-law proposed to be enacted September 2007, with requirement for certification in January 2008.
  - Same requirements as Toronto's by-law

- Mandatory Food Handler Certification is already required in:

- Alberta
- Saskatchewan
- British Columbia
- Northwest Territories

Eby, A., Scott, F., Eyles, J., Harding-Cruz, S., Hall, R., Hunter, B., (May 26, 2001), Is there evidence to recommend mandatory certification of food handlers?, Public Health and Epidemiology Report Ontario (PHERO), 12, 5, 172 – 175.

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# FARMER'S MARKETS

Religious organizations, Service  
clubs  
and Fraternal organizations



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## Farmer's Markets

- June 15, 2006 – amendments made to exempt Farmers Markets from the Food Premises Regulation



- Health Protection and Promotion Act is still enforceable.

- s.13(1) A Medical Officer of Health or public health inspector may require a person to take or to refrain from any action in respect of a health hazard.

### Recommendations to Ensure Food Safety at Ontario's Farmers' Markets

- Created December 29, 2005
- Address recommendations in Justice Ronald J. Haines report on meat regulatory and inspection regimes in Ontario



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## Religious organizations, Service clubs and Fraternal organizations



- Changes implemented June 15, 2006
- Pot-luck suppers and bake sales are now exempt from inspections
- High risk foods (i.e. raw eggs, dairy products, meat, poultry, and fish) are still inspected, therefore NOT exempt
- Facilities are required to post a notice to state whether the facility has been inspected by the health department

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## Summary

- Inspections Defined / Food Safety Audit
- Computer Database / Food Disclosure
- Mandatory Food Handler Certification
- Farmers Markets



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Thank-you for your attention

# ANY QUESTIONS?

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