

Special Event Guidelines For Event Organizers

This document has been designed to assist Organizers and Vendors at Special Events in meeting the requirements of the Health Protection and Promotion Act and the Ontario Food Premises Regulation.

These operational guidelines are applicable to events where food is prepared, sold or distributed to the public and occur for short periods of time. Examples include fall fairs, carnivals, music festivals, food festivals, street festivals and plowing matches. The Leeds, Grenville and Lanark District Health Unit is committed to working with you to ensure the event is successful and safe for your guests.

Each food vendor at a special event must comply with the Health Protection and Promotion Act and the Food Premises Regulation. This includes businesses providing samples to the public as part of a display. The following categories of food premises are permitted to operate provided they meet the requirements set out in the legislation:

- Fixed premises (permanent buildings equipped with kitchen facilities)
- Mobile Preparation Premises

Please view the Ontario Food Premises Regulation available online at the following link: <https://www.ontario.ca/laws/regulation/R17493>.

The health unit may conduct site inspections to ensure compliance. Some vendors may be exempt from the Food Premises Regulation (e.g. religious organizations, service clubs, fraternal organizations and charities) provided certain conditions are met. Please refer to the "[Requirements for Groups Exempt from the Food Premises Regulation for Special Events](#)" document or contact the health unit if you wish to qualify for an exemption. Inspections of these premises may still be conducted under the Health Protection and Promotion Act.

General Requirements

- The organizer of the event must notify the Medical Officer of Health of the Leeds, Grenville and Lanark District Health Unit in writing. In order to process and respond to your notifications and better serve your vendors, we request that notification is received by this office at least 30 days prior to the event (Coordinator Notification form).
- If there is more than one vendor attending the event, the organizer of the event must ensure that each vendor completes the Vendor Notification form and provide them to the health unit.
- The site proposed for the event must be dry, well drained, and free of any health hazards.

Food Safety

It is the goal of the health unit to assist you in providing safe food to the patrons of your event. Some foods require extra attention to ensure their safety. Potentially hazardous foods are those foods that are capable of supporting the growth of microorganisms that cause illness or the production of toxins by such organisms. These may include, but are not limited to, meat and meat products, poultry, fish and shellfish, eggs, dairy and dairy products, grains and cereals such as rice and pasta, sauces, gravy and unpasteurized juices.

For the preparation and service of food, utilizing self-contained mobile food premises is recommended. Premises without a valid exemption that do not comply with the minimum standards set out in the Food Premises Regulation will not be permitted to open until such time as all requirements are met.

Approved Sources

- All meat must be inspected. Check meat and meat products for stamps and tags.
- Use only Grade A and B eggs (never use ungraded, cracked, or Grade C eggs).
- All milk must be pasteurized.
- Do not serve food to the public that has not been prepared in an inspected food premises (i.e. do not prepare food at home).

Transportation of Food

- Refrigerated trucks, mechanical refrigeration units, and insulated coolers are all methods that can be used for transporting hazardous food to the event provided the food can be maintained at 4°C or less. Thermometers must be placed in each cooler or refrigeration unit to monitor the temperature of the food.

Food Temperatures

- Keep cold foods cold and hot foods hot! Potentially hazardous foods must be held at 4°C or lower for cold holding or 60°C or above for hot holding.
- Frozen food should be held at -18°C or lower.
- Cold holding units must be equipped with thermometers.
- Cook/Reheat foods to the proper temperature.
- A probe thermometer is required to check internal temperatures of food.

Food Protection

- Food and food preparation surfaces must be protected from contamination by means of shields, cabinets, containers. Condiment containers must have closable lids with separate dispensing utensils or be in bulk dispensing units (ie. squeeze bottles or pump, individual packets).
- Only single service items (e.g. disposable plates and cups) are allowed for serving food to customers.
- Keep raw meat separate from ready-to-eat foods.
- All barbecue stations and food vending carts must have an umbrella or covering to protect food from contamination.
- The premises must be free from conditions that adversely affect the wholesomeness of the food.

Food Handlers

- There is at least one food handler or supervisor on the premises who has completed food handler training during every hour in which the premises is operating.
 - Food handlers must follow good personal hygiene practices: wash hands frequently, refrain from smoking or eating while handling food, wear clean clothing and hair coverings.
 - Use utensils to handle food to minimize direct hand contact.
 - Do not handle money and food without washing hands in between. It is recommended that one person be in charge of food handling and another in charge of handling money.
 - Gloves are not a substitute for handwashing. Each time gloves are changed, hands must be washed. Change your gloves as often as you would wash your hands.
 - Alcohol hand sanitizer is not a replacement for handwashing.
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Sinks

- A separate handwash basin supplied with hot and cold running water must be conveniently located for food handlers in the food preparation area, with a supply of liquid soap and paper towels.
- A two compartment sink is required for cleaning and sanitizing utensils.

Water Supply

- Water used for drinking, food preparation, handwashing and dishwashing must be potable. For water sources other than a municipal water treatment system, the health unit must be notified in advance so that the water source can be assessed and tested (3 samples taken over 3 weeks are required).
- Disinfect drinking water distribution systems (e.g., hoses) prior to the event.
- Hoses supplying water to food premises must be made of food grade material (not garden hoses).
- If a water hauler is being used to supply the event, the company name and address must be provided to the health unit in advance so the water source and vehicle can be inspected.

Sanitary Facilities and Waste Water Disposal

- Have washroom facilities and handwash stations available for vendors and patrons. Portable facilities and handwash stations are acceptable.
- Keep facilities in a clean and sanitary condition.
- All sewage waste, including sink waste, must be disposed of in a clean and sanitary manner. No wastewater can be dumped onto the ground. Holding tanks must be pumped out as often as is necessary and the waste must be disposed of at an approved dump station.
- Table 3.7.4.3.C from Division B of the Ontario Building Code 2012 should be used to determine the minimum number of washroom facilities required for your event.

Item	Number of Persons of Each Sex	Minimum Number of Water Closets for Each Sex
1	1 to 50	1
2	51 to 150	2
3	151 to 250	3
4	251 to 375	4
5	376 to 500	5
6	over 500	6 plus 1 for each additional increment of 150 persons of each sex in excess of 500

Source: Ontario Building Code 2012, Division B, Part 3, Table 3.7.4.3.C.

Garbage Disposal

- Each food vendor must have appropriate garbage receptacles equipped with lids.
- An adequate number of garbage receptacles shall be provided for use by the public and placed in locations convenient for use.
- Garbage receptacles must be emptied as necessary, but not less than once daily.

Animal Exhibits/Petting Zoos

- Post signs at each animal exhibit stating the following:

NOTICE

Wash hands with soap and water after touching animals. Do not eat or drink while touching animals (a sample sign is provided for your convenience).

- Ensure manure is quickly and thoroughly cleaned up and appropriately discarded.
- Do not allow the public to drink unpasteurized milk.
- Ensure barriers are adequate to impede the touching of animals that should not be handled by the public (e.g. newborns).
- Do not display animals that are ill or those known to be positive for E. coli 0157:H7 and other infectious diseases.
- Clean and disinfect rails and floors daily.
- Do not set up animal exhibits in close proximity to food premises.
- Provide hand wash stations in close proximity to these areas.

For further information on petting zoos, please contact the Community Health Protection Department at our Brockville office at 613-345-5685 or at Smiths Falls office at 613-283-2740.

The event must be operated in such a manner, to ensure no health hazards exist on the site.

Additional considerations for your special event:

Do you have an emergency plan?

We all hope that each event we plan will go smoothly and not be interrupted by an emergency. During special events, there usually are large numbers of people attending, Many attendees could be visitors to the area who are unfamiliar with your community. It is important to contemplate the types of incidents that could lead to a medical emergency such dehydration, exposure to the elements and or participants engaging in the use of substances. These can range from alcohol, cannabis as well as other substances. As it is well known that illicit opioids are present in many of our communities in Leeds Grenville and Lanark, having event organizers and volunteers trained in how to identify and respond to an opioid overdose including naloxone administration can save lives. The health unit can provide overdose response training.

Other incidents including severe weather events should also be considered and having a plan in place to alert people of impending dangers and what action to take, as well as a plan of evacuation for the site. It is advisable to work with fire officials, the police, the emergency management coordinator and the health unit to ensure that should an emergency occur, that injuries and/or deaths can be prevented or at least minimized.



**For more information, please call 1-800-660-5853
or visit our website at www.healthunit.org**