



Starting a Safe Food Business Darebin City Council

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1. Introduction

The objective of these specifications is to ensure that the layout and construction of food premises minimises opportunities for food contamination. Food businesses are required to ensure that their food premises, fixtures, fittings, equipment and transport vehicles are designed and constructed to be cleaned and, where necessary, sanitised.

Businesses must ensure that premises are provided with the necessary services, waste disposal, light, ventilation, cleaning and personal hygiene facilities, storage space and access to toilets.

These specifications are based on the new National Food Safety Standards which became law in Victoria in 2002 and reflect international best practice.

Existing premises that do not comply with these Specifications will be required to upgrade in situations where ***the cleanliness conditions of the food premises*** are not being maintained.

These specifications do not apply for Temporary Food Stalls, but can be applied to Mobile Food Vending Vehicles and Domestic Kitchens.

If you have any queries please do not hesitate to contact us:

Health Protection Unit

274 Gower Street Preston 3072

Phone: (03) 8470 8658

Fax: (03) 9261 4880

Email: health@darebin.vic.gov.au

Website: www.darebin.vic.gov.au

2. Registration Procedure

2.1 Planning Permit and/or Building Permit

Prior to making an application to Council's Health Protection Unit, make an enquiry about your proposal to Council's Statutory Planning unit on (03) 8470 8850 and Building unit on (03) 8470 8899.

With all commercial works it is advisable that you check with Council's Statutory Planning and Building services to determine whether your intended proposal requires further permit/s. If a Planning and/or Building permit is required, do not commence any work on the food premises until you have received the required permit/s.

If you proceed with the works and commence operating without the required permit/s, you will be required to stop operating your business until you have the necessary permit/s.

2.1.1 Compliance with Disability Access Requirements

All buildings should be accessible to, and provide facilities for all members of the public, including people with a disability. The Building Code of Australia sets the minimum requirements which should be assessed by your Building Surveyor as part of the Building Permit process.

By providing good access to people with a disability, whether they are patrons or staff, you are also increasing access for a wide range of other people including mothers with prams, older people and delivery people with trolleys. With 19% of the population having a disability of some kind, it makes good business sense to provide access for everyone.

2.2 On-Site Inspection

Contact the Darebin Health Protection Unit on (03) 8470 8658 to arrange a meeting with a Health Officer on-site to discuss your proposed food premises.

2.3 Plans Submission and Approval

From your discussions, draw a plan of your proposal on A4 or A3 Size paper, showing the following items:

- the use of each area of the premises;
- the location of all fittings, hand basins, sinks, cool rooms and equipment;
- location of the floor waste drain/s, cleaner's sink and grease trap;
- details of floors, walls, ceilings, fittings and their finishes; and
- provide specifications on the Mechanical Exhaust System.

Then, submit to the Health Protection Unit:

- a) A copy of the plans on A4 or A3 Size paper and
- b) A completed Application for Plans Approval form.

2.4 Food Safety Supervisor (FSS)

All **Class 1** and **Class 2** food premises require a Food Safety Supervisor (FSS). You must name someone to be the FSS for your business. The FSS must ensure that all staff who handle food in the business have the skills and knowledge appropriate to their duties.

The FSS is required to undertake formal training and must complete the Food Safety Supervisor Course prior to the business opening and submit a copy of the Statement of Attainment (Course Certificate) at the Final Inspection.

For more information about Food Safety Supervisor requirements visit www.health.vic.gov.au/foodsafety/skills_knowledge/fss. Contact the Health Protection Unit on (03) 8470 8658 for local training providers.

Class 3 and **Class 4** food premises do not require a qualified Food Safety Supervisor. It is recommended you complete the free online training at <http://dofoodsafely.health.vic.gov.au>.

2.5 Food Safety Program (FSP)/ Minimum Record Sheets

At the final inspection you may have to submit a FSP with the Health Officer. A Food Safety Program is a written plan that demonstrates how your business will manage the safety of the food you prepare, serve, manufacture or sell.

All Class 2 food premises that sell food are required to maintain a Food Safety Program. Most businesses are able to use a user-friendly template to develop their Food Safety Program. For information on the templates visit: www.health.vic.gov.au/foodsafety.

All Class 3 premises are only required to maintain minimum records for the premises and are not required to maintain a Food Safety Program. For more information on food business classifications visit: www.health.vic.gov.au/foodsafety.

2.6 Pre-Final Inspection/s

Contact your Health Officer for inspections to be made during construction. We encourage food business operators and/or builders to work closely with your Health Officer at all stages of construction.

2.7 Final Inspection and Application for Registration

Once the premises has been given final approval to operate, the Health Officer will provide you with an Application for Food Act registration form. At the final inspection the Health Officer will require the following items:

- A completed Application for Food Act registration form;
- New Registration Fee according to Class Type; and
- Statement of Attainment for the Food Safety Supervisor.

The Certificate of Registration will be posted out to you within two weeks.

3. Design and Construction of Food Premises

3.1 General Requirements

OBJECTIVE - The food premises is designed so that it is easy to maintain in a clean and sanitary condition and food is able to be handled without the risk of cross-contamination.

3.1.1 Size of the Food Premises

All food preparation, walk-in cool rooms, walk-in freezer rooms and dry food storage areas must be of sufficient size to ensure that such areas do not become overcrowded with fittings, appliances, food and staff. Overcrowded areas are difficult to keep clean and may create further problems, such as, food spoilage due to the inability to adequately rotate stock, harbourage for pests and vermin and potential work safety issues.

3.1.2 Layout of Food Production

Plan the premises so that food flows from raw to ready-to-eat, without going back and forth across the food preparation areas. To do this, the design should separate the preparation and serving areas from contaminable areas, such as raw food receivals, those areas receiving used glasses, cutlery and crockery, wash-up areas and cleaning equipment.

Where possible, access to office/staff facilities should be located so that staff do not have to cross food preparation areas.

3.1.3 Standards of Shop Fittings

Standards of shop fittings must be high in food premises/vehicles. For example, no rough grouting between tiles, no tiles laid unevenly, no roughly finished rendering, no exposed timber or brick surfaces. Laying vinyl or similar floor sheeting to form a cove without using a solid preformed coving fillet to support the sheeting, is not permissible.

All construction and fit-outs must follow manufacturers or Australian Standard installation specifications.

3.2 Water Supply

Provide the premises with an adequate supply of clean (potable) water for the safe preparation of food and effective cleaning and sanitising of food premises and equipment.

3.3 Sewage and Waste Water Disposal

If possible, grease traps should not be located in a food preparation or storage area. Otherwise issues of offensive odours, cross-contamination and difficulty in keeping the area around the grease trap clean, may arise. However, where fitted inside the premises and above the floor, allow enough distance between the grease trap and wall/s so that those areas can be cleaned.

Contact Yarra Valley Water's Trade Waste Customer Service Officer on (03) 9872 1240 to determine whether a Grease trap is required for your premises.

3.4 Storage of Garbage and Recyclable Material

OBJECTIVE - To ensure that garbage storage does not contaminate food or attract pests, rodents and animals.

The garbage area must be paved and of sufficient size to hold all garbage and recyclable storage containers. Oil drums should be stored off the ground to allow proper cleaning underneath.

A bin washing facility may be required in garbage storage areas where wastes are predominantly wet and continually foul the bins. The area must be:

- provided with a hose tap connected to the water supply; and
- graded and drained to a floor waste drain connected to sewerage.

3.5 Ventilation

OBJECTIVE - Food premises must have sufficient natural or mechanical ventilation to effectively remove fumes, smoke, steam and vapours from the food premises.

Ventilation in a food premises requires compliance with the Building Code of Australia (BCA). Under the BCA, premises must be provided with means of ventilation that will control the circulation of objectionable odours and accumulation of harmful contamination by micro-organisms, pathogens and toxins.

Adhering to the Mechanical Exhaust Ventilation Code AS 1668 Part 1 and Part 2 will satisfy the BCA requirements.

Mechanical ventilation systems should be installed above cooking equipment and commercial dishwashers.

3.5.1 Design and Installation

Guidance on the design and installation of Mechanical Ventilation systems may be found in Australian Standard 1668 Part 1 **The use of Mechanical Ventilation and Air Conditioning in Buildings** and Part 2 **Mechanical Ventilation for acceptable indoor-air quality**.

Also enquire with Council's Building Department on (03) 8470 8899 about their requirements on fire safety measures for the Mechanical Exhaust System.

3.5.2 Affecting the Amenity of the Area

Please Note: Beware of siting exhaust ducts, cool rooms, vents and any other motors near neighbours windows and public places, as noise and odour could be to the detriment of the neighbours, the public and the general amenity of the area.

Discuss this issue with your Health Officer and/or Council's Planning Department on (03) 8470 8850.

3.6 Lighting

Light fixtures must be flush mounted or recessed into the ceiling. Where unpackaged food is handled, light globes/tubes should be enclosed within dustproof diffusers, in plastic sleeves or be shatter-proof to reduce a food contamination hazard should they break.

Light fittings in food preparation and wash-up areas must be provided at about 1 fluorescent light per 10 square metres of ceiling space, be positioned so that shadows are not cast upon

working surfaces and not create an area which is difficult to clean. For example, "T" shaped fittings are not recommended as dirt, dust and grease can build up on the flat surfaces.

Note: Do not use down lights with ventilation slots as these cannot be sealed against pests entering the premises through the ceiling.

4. Floors, Walls and Ceilings

4.1 Floors

Floors in wet areas and where unpackaged food is prepared, stored and served must be:

- made of a non-slip material that does not absorb cooking grease, food liquids or water eg. Stainless steel (non-slip profile), ceramic tiles, quarry tiles, welded vinyl sheeting, epoxy resins (complying with AS 3554 – Adhesives Epoxy-For raised pavement marker installations). NOT vinyl tiles or smooth sealed concrete;
- able to be effectively cleaned; and
- able to resist damage due to the type of operation on top e.g. no vinyl near cooking appliances, no heavy equipment on vinyl sheeting, no ceramic tiles behind cookers.

4.1.1 SUITABILITY OF FLOOR FINISHES FOR FOOD PREMISES AREAS

Finish									Comments
	Wet washed areas	Food preparation	Vegetable preparation	Servery	Store room	Chillers/freezers	Bin store	Eating areas	
Stainless steel non-slip profile	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	Welded joints
Ceramic tiles	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	Epoxy grout
Quarry tiles	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	Sealed
Steel trowel case hardened concrete			•		•	•	•	•	Smooth-sealed finish, no joints
Carpet/carpet tiles								•	
Wooden flooring								•	Sealed
Polyvinyl sheet	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	Heat-welded joints (not suitable adjacent hot fat appliances)
Laminated thermosetting plastic sheet	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	Heat-welded joints (not suitable adjacent hot fat appliances)
Vinyl tiles					•			•	
Plastic matting				•				•	Should be used for safety reasons only It shall be easily cleaned and laid in sections that can be removable for cleaning
Cork tiles								•	Sealed
Epoxy resins	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	Complying with AS 3554

Note: Cool rooms/freezers flooring must comply with the requirements of food preparation if they are frequently entered from food preparation areas and grease from floors is walked in.

Coving should be installed in the following areas where:

- it is difficult to keep clean such as beneath cooking appliances, fixed equipment and storage shelves;
- there is gaps between the floor and walls; and
- the floor gets very wet and/or dirty or where floors are hosed with water.

Note: Do not use the black plastic coving with the small radius also known as 'feather edge skirting'. This is for dining areas only.

Floors in food premises where the floor gets very wet and/or dirty or where floors are hosed down must have coving and floor drains installed that are connected to sewerage.

The floor must be properly graded so that all water flows to the drains and does not pond.

Hot and cold water taps fitted with hose connections should be installed close by the floor drain/s at least 600mm above the floor.

Where a floor waste drain is not installed, a cleaner's sink must be installed in or next to the food preparation area (Refer Section 5.1.3).

4.2 Walls and Ceilings

Walls and ceilings must be:

- sealed to prevent the entry of dirt, dust and pests;
- constructed of a smooth even material, able to be easily cleaned; and
- to the extent that is practicable, be unable to provide harbourage for pests.

Walls in food preparation, cooking and wash-up areas that are splashed with water or food residues or affected by cooking grease, must be finished with a durable surface which prevents those liquids being absorbed into it. For example, stainless steel, ceramic tiles, vinyl sheeting, glass.

NOT painted plasterboard or brickwork.

All partitioned walls must finish not less than 150mm above floor level and must be capped at the top at an angle of 45°.

Ceilings must be constructed of a smooth dustproof non-porous approved material.

For example, painted plaster board, cool room sandwich panel, and melamine.

Suspended and/or drop in panel ceilings are not to be used in Food Preparation areas or over areas where unpackaged food is displayed or served.

4.2.1 SUITABILITY OF WALL FINISHES FOR FOOD PREMISES AREAS

Finish	Wet washed areas	Food preparation	Vegetable preparation	Servery	Store room	Chillers/freezers	Bin store	Eating areas	Comments
Stainless steel	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	Welded joints Waterproof screw covers
Ceramic tiles	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	Epoxy grout
Vinyl sheet	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	Heat-welded joints
Painted plaster					•		•	•	Smooth finish
Feature brick								•	
Aluminium sheet	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	Welded or sealed joints
Steel sheet							•		Welded or sealed joints
Trowelled cement		•	•	•	•	•	•	•	Polished surface
Wood panelling								•	Wood sealed
Painted brickwork					•		•	•	Flush joints and solid surfaces
Concrete					•		•	•	Sealed smooth finish
Pre-formed panels	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	H bars joints mastic sealed. In wet areas/food preparation shall be integrated into a dwarf wall or set on plinth

4.2.2 Pipes, Conduits and Electrical Wiring

Service pipes, conduits and electrical wiring shall either be:

- a) concealed in floors, plinths, walls or ceilings; or
- b) fixed on brackets so as to provide at least 25mm clearance between the pipe and adjacent vertical surface and 100mm between the pipe or conduit and adjacent horizontal surfaces.

Service pipes, conduits and electrical wiring shall not be placed in the recessed toe space of plinths or any equipment.

It is recommended that where electrical appliances are used on island benches electrical cords and plugs shall emanate from the ceiling.

5. Fixtures, Fittings and Equipment

5.1 Equipment for Cleaning and Sanitising

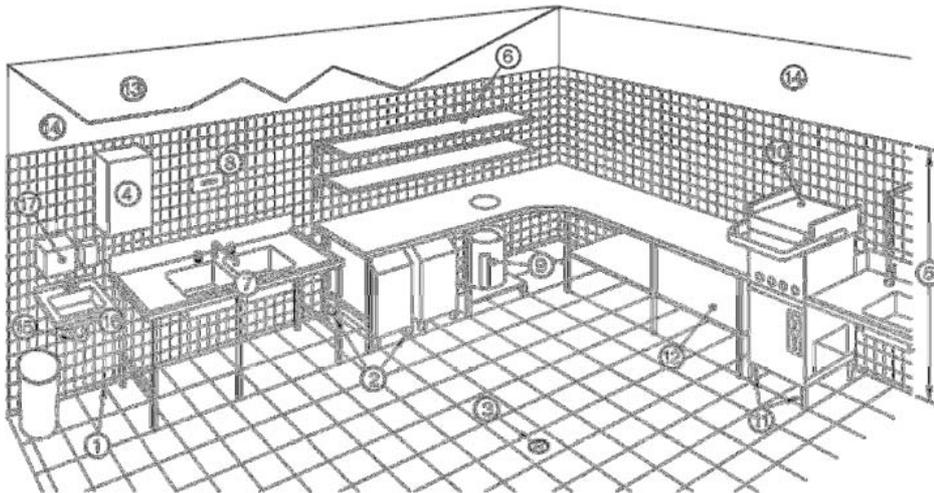
5.1.1 Cleansing Of Equipment, Eating and Drinking Utensils

A double bowl sink must be provided in wash-up areas for the cleansing of all equipment, utensils and appliances. The sinks must be big enough to handle the largest utensils, pots or appliances that need to be cleaned. The wall surface at the rear of each sink must be flashed with 450mm of ceramic tiles or stainless steel extending 100mm from each side of the sinks.

A single bowl sink together with a dishwashing/glass washing machine is a suitable alternative in some situations e.g. bars, canteens.

Storage and draining racks for air-drying of cleaned equipment, utensils and appliances should be made from materials that are unable to absorb water or food liquids e.g. laminated metal.

5.1.1a Example of a Wash up area



Legend:

- | | |
|--|---|
| 1. Floor/wall coving | 11. Legs 150mm min. |
| 2. Castors to under bench storage | 12. Underside of support bracket
150mm to the finished floor surface |
| 3. Impervious floor graded and drained | |
| 4. Hot water heater sealed to wall | 13. Painted plasterboard ceiling |
| 5. Walls tiled | 14. Smooth cement rendering |
| 6. Shelving 25mm clear of wall | 15. Water drainage pipes concealed into
walls |
| 7. Sink unit on metal frame | 16. Hand basin, hot and cold water
mixing set |
| 8. Thermometer | 17. Soap and towel dispenser |
| 9. Garbage receptacle | |
| 10. Dishwasher with temperature
indicating device | |

5.1.2 A Sink for the Preparation of Food

It is recommended that where raw foods need to be washed or soaked or frozen foods thawed, a separate sink used only for this purpose be installed. Using wash-up sinks to wash or thaw food could contaminate these foods with detergents and/or bacteria and viruses from used glasses, utensils and crockery.

5.1.3 Cleaners Sink

A cleaner's sink must be equipped with hot and cold water. If possible, construct a cupboard in the food preparation area which contains both the cleaners sink and cleaning equipment.

Floor washings should be emptied into the cleaner's sink, not the wash-up or food preparation sinks or hand basin.

5.2 Design and Construction of Fixtures, Fittings and Equipment

All tables, benches, shelves, trays, counters, appliances, equipment and fittings must be made of materials that are durable, non-corrosive, free of cracks and crevices and easy to thoroughly clean.

Surfaces and equipment that are in contact with food must be smooth, non-toxic and constructed so as to prevent water, food liquids and cooking grease being absorbed.

For example, stainless steel, melamine, and where necessary must be capable of being completely dismantled for the purpose of thorough cleaning and sanitising.

5.2.1 Walk-in Cool Rooms and Freezer Rooms

All the above floor, wall and ceiling specifications apply to walk-in coolrooms and freezer-rooms. Storage racks in these rooms must be open to allow circulation of cold air. Adequate provision must be made for the collection and disposal of condensate from the evaporative units into a drainage system located outside the cool room or through a tundish (not into a bucket/container). Each room should be provided with an external thermometer gauge.

For safety reasons install an internal push-rod device to unlock the door from the inside. If the top of the cool room or freezer room is built in such a position that an inaccessible cavity or void is formed between the top of the cool room/freezer room and the ceiling, this space must be adequately sealed off.

5.2.2 Dry Storage Room

The dry storage room should be an area of adequate size to prevent the area from becoming overcrowded and difficult to keep clean and tidy. The shelves must be constructed of a material that is unable to absorb food liquids or water. The shelves must be constructed of a material that is unable to absorb food liquids or water and be free of cracks and crevices. For example, laminated wood, steel and vinyl (**Plastic Contact on bare wood is NOT suitable**). Pallets must not be used as shelving as it is difficult to keep the floor underneath clean.

5.2.3 Cold Display Cabinets including Self-Serve

Unpackaged foods on display must be protected from customer contamination by the use of glass shields or plastic lids.

Where displays of food are self-serve, separate utensils for each food type must be provided that allow customers to obtain ready-to-eat food without using their hands or the food must be dispensed in a way that prevents contamination of other food in the display. The utensils must be capable of being stored so that their handles do not contaminate food.

5.3 Installation of Fixtures, Fittings and Equipment

All equipment, appliances and fittings that are not easily moved must be installed so that the areas under, behind and at the sides can be easily cleaned by providing clearances of at least 150mm. Where it is not practicable to raise fittings etc. above the floor, away from walls, then it should be sealed with coving.

Any gaps or crevices created in the installation of equipment must be sealed or filled-in to eliminate breeding areas for rodents and other pests. For example, cavities, false bottoms and similar hollow spaces should not be formed in the construction of cupboards and must be filled with concrete or the cupboards should be supported on legs.

Silicone is not suitable to seal around or between cookers. Metal flashing must be used. Shelving that cannot be sealed to the wall must be kept 25mm clear of the wall and be fixed on metal supports with the lowest shelf not less than 150mm above the floor level.

5.4 Hand Washing Facilities

5.4.1 Location

Hand basins must be provided in all areas of the premises where:

- unpackaged food is handled;
- utensils and equipment are washed up; and
- the toilet cubicles are or immediately adjacent to toilets.

Please Note: Hand basins should be located at the entrance used by staff returning to the unpackaged food handling area.

Hand basins must be installed so that they are accessible and no further than 5 metres from any area where food handlers are handling unpackaged food.

In a take-away, if unpackaged food is handled in a servery area as well as a rear food preparation/cooking area, then a hand basin must be installed in both these areas.

5.4.2 Set-Up of Hand Basin

Each hand basin must be provided with:

- a sufficient supply of hot and cold water discharged through a single outlet;
- soap; and
- disposable paper towels.

The size of the basin should allow easy and effective hand washing e.g. 11 litres capacity with minimum dimensions of 500mm by 400mm 'off the wall'. It is recommended that hand basins be hands-free, either foot or thigh operated or electronically operated.

The wall surface at the rear of each hand basin is to be flashed with 450mm of ceramic tiles or stainless steel extending 100mm from each side of the sinks. Hand basins must be clearly designated only for washing hands, arms and face.

Electric air dryers installed as the sole means of drying hands are not permitted.

6. Storage, Toilets and Food Transport Vehicles

6.1 Storage Facilities for Staff

A separate room, locker or cupboard must be provided to store outdoor clothing, footwear and personal items belonging to staff in order to prevent contamination of food. This facility should be located near the entrance staff use to enter the premises, to avoid staff walking across food preparation areas to get to their storage area.

6.2 Storage Facilities for Cleaning Equipment

A separate room or cupboard must be provided for storing detergents, sanitisers and cleaning equipment to ensure they cannot contaminate food. A suggestion would be to combine this area with the cleaner's sink cupboard.

6.3 Storage Facilities for Cleaned Utensils, Appliances and Equipment

Provide adequate facilities to store cleaned utensils, appliances and other equipment in a way that protects them from contamination.

6.4 Toilets

Toilet facilities for the use of staff should be available either on the premises or within a reasonable distance from the premises. Toilets for public or customer use must not be located where the public must go through food preparation areas to reach them. The toilets should be adequately lit and accessible at all times when staff are working.

Where toilets are provided on the food premises the toilet cubicle/s must be:

- constructed of a smooth material that cannot absorb water eg. tiles;
- separated from food preparation areas by a ventilated room (air-lock) fitted with self-closing doors; or
- provided with a self-closing door and a mechanical exhaust fan which operates when the toilet is in use.

Although not a requirement it is recommended that a 'staff only' toilet be designated, this will assist in maintaining a clean toilet and its availability for staff.

Enquiries about number of toilets and accessible toilets for people with a disability should be directed to Council's Building Department on (03) 8470 8899.

6.5 Food Transport Vehicles

The driving section of the vehicle must be effectively sealed off from the area where unpackaged food is stored or unpackaged food must be transported in sealed containers e.g. eskies.

The internal surfaces of the vehicle or food containers must be smooth, not able to absorb food liquids or water and be easy to clean.

If transporting perishable foods and transport times are 2 hours or longer, the vehicle must be provided with an effective heating and/or refrigeration system to maintain perishable food at safe or required temperatures (that is, hot food at or above 60°C, cold food at or below 5°C and frozen food at or below minus 15°C).

7. General

7.1 Pest Control

All areas of a food premises must be sealed against the entry of pests, rodents and animals. Any gaps or holes in walls, floors, ceilings, inside cupboards, benches, shelving and around service pipes where they pass through walls, floors, ceilings and benches must be effectively sealed.

Electronic insect zapper units, if installed, should be suitably located so as not to contaminate unpackaged food or food contact surfaces. Every window and ventilator opening to the outer air must be fitted with insect screens.

Every doorway opening to the outer air should be provided with a self-closing, fly-proof door, air curtains or heavy-duty commercial quality plastic door strips that are properly fitted and span the entire height and width of the doorway.

7.2 Fire Fighting Equipment

It is strongly recommended that a fire extinguisher and fire blanket be situated next to the cooking appliances. Contact Council's Building Department for fire safety advice on (03) 8470 8899.

7.3 Smoke Free Requirements

Tobacco Act Reforms have introduced smoke free requirements. For up-to-date information, advice or signage, contact the Health Department or go to the Tobacco Act Reforms website: www.health.vic.gov.au/tobaccoreforms.

8. References

Safe Food Australia, 2nd Edition January 2001, **A guide to the Food Safety Standards.**

National Food Safety Standards 3.2.2 – **Food Safety Practices;** and
National Food Safety Standards 3.2.3 – **Food Premises and Equipment;**

You can view and download these Standards for free from
<http://www.foodstandards.gov.au/foodstandardscode/>

Australian Standards 4674-2004 **Design, construction & fit-out of food premises.**

To obtain a copy of this standard contact 1300 65 46 46 or order online
www.standards.com.au