



## **The hygienic production and service of ice**



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## Ice making

Previous surveys carried out at public houses, restaurants and takeaway outlets have demonstrated that the quality of ice served with beverages can be below an acceptable microbiological standard. The poor quality of ice dispensed could be due to a number of reasons including the quality of water used to make ice cubes, the frequency and method of cleaning ice-making machines, and the manner of handling ice as it is served with drinks.

This leaflet has been prepared with a view to assisting food businesses to implement measures that will reduce the risks to health posed by bacterial contamination of ice. The Food Safety (General Food Hygiene) Regulations 1995 require that ice must be made, handled and stored under conditions which protect it from contamination.

## Ice machines

**Water Supply** - machines should:

- be plumbed for filling directly from the mains water supply which in itself must be of an acceptable quality
- drain directly into the main drains via a U-bend in the outlet, to prevent contaminated air and water flowing back into the machine.

**Location** - The siting of the machine should:

- be in an area free from dust and dirt, preferably off the ground
- be where levels of lighting are adequate to allow ease of use and the effectiveness of cleaning to be monitored
- ensure that air inlet and air outlet pipes within the heat exchanger are not obstructed
- allow sufficient space for maintenance and adequate ventilation for efficient air movement around the unit.

## Machine maintenance

It is recommended that a contract for maintenance be set up with the suppliers of the ice machine. It is advisable to keep a record of any maintenance or cleaning carried out, showing the frequency of servicing and action taken.

## Cleaning

Ice machines, freezers and containers should:

- be serviced and cleaned in accordance with the manufacturer's instructions
- on a quarterly basis, have the removable parts of the machine taken apart for cleaning and to check for breakages
- be checked for build-up of mould or dirt which should be cleaned immediately that these become apparent

Parts of any machine, or utensil that come into direct contact with ice must be cleaned and disinfected periodically.

Any ice cubes within the compartment should be removed and discarded before starting any maintenance where there is likely to be contamination of the ice.

Cleaning should be done using a detergent and warm water, followed by a clean rinse and disinfection. Alternatively, a proprietary disinfectant or solution of bicarbonate of soda may be used, followed by a final rinse with clean water.

All cleaning chemicals used must be "taint-free" and all cloths must be clean and lint free, preferably disposable. Cleaning regimes for utensils, scoops and ice buckets should include appropriate disinfection.

## **Protecting the ice from contamination hazards**

Ice should only be handled using a clean scoop. The scoop provided should be smooth, impervious and capable of being disinfected. It should be protected from contamination by dust, dirt and bacteria when not in use. The scoop must be made of a material that will not shed particles into the ice. The handle of the scoop should not be allowed to be in contact with the ice.

All relevant staff should be trained in the correct procedures and wash their hands regularly.

The use of ice trays to make ice is not recommended as dispensing of ice may involve direct handling, which can lead to contamination.

It is recommended that customers are not invited to serve themselves from ice buckets.

The door of the ice storage compartment should be kept closed and bar top dispensers kept covered, except when removing ice. Ice remaining in ice buckets at the end of the day should be disposed of, and should not be returned to the ice machine or freezer.

For further information and advice please contact a member of the Environmental Health Services team

Further written guidance is contained in the "Industry Guide to Good Hygiene Practice Catering Guide." ISBN 0 900 103 000

Information in this guidance is based on LACORS ice sampling guidance 1997 and the Brewers & Licensed Retailers Association Guidance note 2000.