

 West Lothian Council	Environmental Health		SUBJECT: CLEANING PROCEDURE FOR WATER CONTAINERS
	4	Food Safety/Food Hygiene	NUMBER: FH04
Revised: 24/12/2007		Health & Safety	
		Public Health	
STATUS: TRADE ADVICE		Pollution Control	
		Pest Control/Dog Warden	

Information Sheet FH04

Water Containers in Mobile Businesses

If you use portable containers of any type to carry water for use in your food operation, then you must take precautions to make sure that the water does not become contaminated.

Water Supply

The water used to fill the water containers is important. It should:

- Come from a tap fed directly by mains water. It should not come via a loft storage tank, unless you can show that it is cleaned out regularly. If you need to use water that does not come from the public (mains) water supply, you should contact us to discuss it in more detail.
- Not come from a hose if this can be avoided. If it does, the hose will need cleaned in the same way as the water tanks themselves. (see below). If a hose is needed, it must not come into direct contact with the ground, as this can allow dirt and bacteria into the containers.

Container Types

Only use containers which are designed for “food use” and keep them in good condition. If you can't clean them effectively any more, you will need to replace them.

Clean water containers must be clearly distinguished from those used for waste water.

Cleaning

To make sure that water in containers is safe to use for food preparation, hand washing and cleaning etc, the following cleaning procedure must be followed regularly – preferably at the end of each working day. Also use this method before using new containers for the first time.

1. Empty all remaining water from all containers.
2. Only use fresh mains water from a clean tap for cleaning.

3. Clean and wash the outside of the container to remove any dirt, dust or other contamination. Use hot water and a suitable bactericidal detergent.
4. Thoroughly rinse out the container.
5. Following the pack instructions, make up a suitable sterilising solution (eg Milton, home brew cleaner or products intended for caravans) with hot water. Use this to fill the water container to the brim and leave to stand for the recommended contact time. Always ensure that you have read and understood the instructions before using any cleaning chemical.
6. At the same time, clean and soak the cap and any pipework in a bowl of the solution. Remove any seals from the cap. Make sure all of the pieces are under the water.

If you can't disconnect your pipework, you can clean it in place by pumping the solution through your pipes at stage 8, below.
7. Pay particular attention to the neck of the container and the cap, which have been found to carry dangerous bacteria. You may need to use a small brush for this. Keep the brush for cleaning only and don't use it for anything else.
8. After the contact time empty away the solution and, if the instructions call for it, then rinse with fresh water.
9. Put the cap back on and store the container in a clean area until it is needed again.
10. Fill containers straight from a clean mains tap, in a clean area. Do not use a filling pipe if it can be avoided. If you have to use one then clean it immediately before use using the sterilising solution as above.

This procedure will help to keep your water in a safe condition – but only if it is followed carefully every time.

Samples may be taken of the water you use. If it is found to be unsafe then legal action may be taken against you.

If you are in any doubt about what to do, then please contact us on 01506 282500 or environmentalhealth@westlothian.gov.uk.