

A newsletter from the Public Protection Team of Wealden District Council



## Lights Out on Lighting Up

From 1st July 2007 all enclosed and substantially enclosed public places and workplaces will become smoke free. The move to protect

people from the effects of second hand smoke is part of a wider plan to promote better health and well being.

*Read more on how it affects businesses on page 2 and 3*

## Call to reduce levels of salt

Most people eat too much salt. This can raise blood pressure, which increases your risk of heart disease and stroke. The Food Standards Agency (FSA) is currently running a major public health campaign to reduce salt consumption in the UK.

Around 75% of the salt we eat comes from processed foods, so the FSA has been working with the food industry to encourage reductions in the levels of salt in these foods.

All sectors of the food industry – retailers, manufacturers, trade associations, caterers and suppliers to the catering industry – have responded positively to calls to reduce salt in foods and continue to be engaged in this programme. 70 organisations across all sectors of the industry have committed to reduce levels of salt in food and some considerable reductions have already been achieved.

The FSA is now in the process of devising a self-reporting framework, which will be used to track progress by the food industry towards achieving the targets. The FSA will be reviewing the salt reduction targets in 2008 to establish what, if any, further reductions are necessary to reach the population average intake target of 6g.

For further advice visit the FSA website  
[www.food.gov.uk/salt](http://www.food.gov.uk/salt)

## Mobile catering vehicle explosion in Crowborough

Following a very serious incident involving fire and explosion within a mobile catering vehicle, Officers of our Occupational Health and Safety Unit have produced some important safety guidance, which includes legal duties regarding the safe use and handling of Liquefied Petroleum Gas (LPG) in mobile catering vehicles.

The incident occurred as a result of very poor practices regarding the use of LPG and other associated appliances in a vehicle trading in Crowborough. As a consequence, two people received burn injuries but this could easily have resulted in multiple fatalities. All known mobile catering vehicle operators have been sent the guidance and asked to carry out risk assessments to ensure they are taking the necessary steps to comply with the legal obligations. This will prevent or minimise the risk of accidents or incidents involving the use, storage and handling of LPG.

The officers have asked businesses to complete a questionnaire to enable further help and advice or training to be given where needed. Officers will also be making unannounced visits to mobile traders throughout the district to check compliance.

**If you would like a copy of the guidance please contact us on 01323 443302 or email [foodandsafety@wealden.gov.uk](mailto:foodandsafety@wealden.gov.uk)**

## Moving Goods . . . Safely



Health and safety officers both from the council and the HSE will this year work in partnership on 'Moving Goods Safely'. The project involves inspections on those businesses where moving goods forms a fundamental part of their business. This will include road haulage, warehousing, distribution, retail food and drink, furniture and white goods. The inspections will

focus on workplace transport, falls, muscular skeletal disorders and slips. Provisional accident figures for 2005/6 show 10,500 worker injuries, 1700 being major injuries and 11 fatal. Cost estimated to be over £110 million per year. Solutions to these accidents could have major impact on workers lives and business profitability.

# Lights Out on Lighting Up *continued*

While the ban on smoking in public places will have the greatest impact on the hospitality sector all workplaces will be affected. Therefore, it pays to start preparing now.

Employers, managers and those in charge of smokefree premises and vehicles will need to:

- Display 'no smoking' signs in smokefree premises.
- Take reasonable steps to ensure that staff, customers/members and visitors are aware that premises and vehicles are legally required to be smokefree.
- Ensure that no one smokes in smokefree premises or vehicles.

You may also want to take these supportive measures:

- Remove ashtrays from smokefree areas.
- Develop a smokefree policy in consultation with staff.
- Provide your staff and customers with support to quit smoking.
- Ensure that your staff and customers know where they can smoke if they choose to.

## What about a smoking shelter?

There is no legal requirement to provide smoking shelters, but if you are considering this please check with Wealden's Planning Officers as you may well require planning permission, particularly if the shelter will be a fixed structure, or if your premises is a listed building.

If you provide an outside smoking shelter or area, you will also need to be sure it is not 'enclosed' or 'substantially enclosed' under the definitions in the smokefree regulations.

## Does the law apply to pubs and clubs that don't sell food?

The law will apply to all pubs and clubs. Whether you run a pub, restaurant, cinema, betting office or a shop smoking will not be permitted inside the premises.

## What are the proposed penalty amounts?

The Government has proposed the following penalties and fines:

- Smoking in a smokefree premises or vehicle: a fixed penalty notice of £50 or a fine not exceeding level 1 on the standard scale (up to £200).
- Failure to display no smoking signs in smokefree premises and vehicles as required by smokefree legislation: a fixed penalty notice of £200 or a fine not exceeding level 3 on the standard scale (up to £1000).
- Failing to prevent smoking in a smokefree premises or vehicle: a fine not exceeding level 4 on the standard scale (up to £2500).

## What are enclosed premises?

Premises will be considered to be enclosed if they have a ceiling or roof and, except for doors, windows or passageways, are wholly enclosed, whether on a permanent or temporary basis.

## ... and substantially enclosed premises?

Premises will be considered to be substantially enclosed if they have a ceiling or roof, but there are openings in the walls which are less than half of the total area of walls, including other structures that serve the purpose of walls and constitute the perimeter of the premises. When determining the area of an opening, no account can be taken of openings in which doors, windows or other fittings can be opened or shut.

## ASH news release

### Smokers take more sick leave: more evidence of the benefits of going smokefree.

New research from Sweden shows that smokers take almost 8 days more sick leave every year than non-smokers. This large, nationally representative study provides the best evidence to date that smoking affects productivity. Adjustments were made for other factors such as socioeconomic status and the type of job undertaken.

Commenting on the study, Deborah Arnott, Director of the health campaigning charity ASH, said: "This research shows clearly that smokers take significantly more time off sick but what is particularly interesting is that once people stop smoking, their productivity immediately improves.

The benefits of quitting smoking cannot be over-stressed and the positive effects can be felt quickly. A non-smoking workforce is therefore more likely to be a productive, healthy workforce."



## Pub Firm Upbeat About Economic Impact of Smokefree

Well known pub chain Mitchells & Butlers (M&B) changed 200 pubs into non-smoking outlets last year ahead of the smoking ban in England and Wales. Reports from November 2006 showed sales growth at these outlets was only 1% lower over the past year than pubs where smoking is still permitted.

Like-for-like sales at the firm's Scottish pubs where smoking is already outlawed rose 1%. A study done over a 7 week period during October and November 2006 showed food sales at the firm's 80 Scottish pubs rose 7%, while drink sales fell by 2%.

Overall, M&B reported a 4.1% rise in like-for-like sales over last year as the firm benefited from a hot summer.

### The government is to raise the legal minimum age to purchase tobacco from 16 to 18 years old, Public Health Minister Caroline Flint has announced

Raising the age of buying tobacco, which will come into effect from 1 October 2007, will follow closely on the heels of the introduction of smokefree public places and workplaces on 1 July 2007.

Bringing the legal age for the purchase of tobacco into line with that of alcohol will reinforce the dangers of smoking to young people, as well as helping retailers comply with the law. It would also bring England and Wales into line with Canada, Australia, New Zealand and the US. Paul Ramsden, Deputy Chief Executive of the Trading Standards Institute, said: "The Institute also believe that changing the age of sale in line with the age limit on, for example, alcohol sales will help eliminate confusion among retailers".

## wealdenbusinesshelp leads the way on going smokefree

The recent improvements to the already successful wealdenbusinesshelp website will provide fast and easy access and better understanding of how Wealden businesses will become Smokefree by 1st July this year. The countdown has started! The site provides updates on

the Law, Frequently asked Questions (FAQ's), Business Specific Factsheets and advice to employers and business managers on going smokefree, supporting employees and where to get help to stop smoking. Visit [www.wealdenbusinesshelp.org.uk](http://www.wealdenbusinesshelp.org.uk) today.



## Seminars to help Wealden Businesses

To help you learn more about how the smokefree laws will affect your business, Wealden District Council is running some free seminars:

Date	Time	Place
Tuesday, 8th May 2007	2 – 4 pm	Committee Room 1, Wealden Council Offices, Hailsham
*Wednesday, 9th May 2007	10 – 12 noon	Committee Room 1, Wealden Council Offices, Hailsham
Thursday, 10th May 2007	2 – 4 pm	Committee Room 1, Wealden Council Offices, Crowborough
*Wednesday, 16th May 2007	10 – 12 noon	Green Room, Uckfield Civic Centre, Uckfield

\*Bengali, Cantonese, and Turkish interpreters available on these dates.

The seminar is FREE but you need to book to ensure a place.

Please contact the Smokefree team on 01323 443302 or email [smokefree@wealden.gov.uk](mailto:smokefree@wealden.gov.uk)

# Would you, your business, and your customers benefit from more knowledge on nutrition?

The Government are already targeting nutrition and diet as a way of improving the nation's health. Food businesses can play their part by understanding the link between diet and disease and planning the food they produce and serve to meet customer needs.

Wealden are now offering the new Level 2 Award in Nutrition which covers:

- **The nutritional content of foods**
- **The main food groups**
- **Nutritional food labelling of foods**

- **Needs of specific groups**
- **Food allergies**
- **Marketing healthy options**

To gain the certificate, candidates must pass the short multiple choice type exam at the end of the course.

The first course will take place on Wednesday 6th June, 9.30 to 4.00, in Committee Room 2, Wealden District Council Offices, Hailsham.

**To book your place or discuss the course, please ring Sophie Hepworth on 01323 443275.**

## Hello to Tracy and Goodbye to Linda

We were delighted to have appointed Tracy Long as our new Technical Support Officer to the Public Protection Team last autumn. She has already made contact with many of the businesses and is doing some very valuable work on support and training events with our businesses.

However we are also very sad to see Linda Wheeler go to pastures new. She had been with Wealden for over 8 years and fulfilled a very important role in the team not just as an officer inspecting under food and health and safety laws, but also leading the sampling programme for food and other premises, and many other duties.

Linda leaves us to work and live in London, where we are sure she will progress well in her successful career.



*New Technical Support Officer, Tracy Long*



*Linda Wheeler, off to live and work in London,*

## Increased numbers of Health and Safety Enforcement Notices issued in 2006/7

The Occupational Health and Safety unit served 75 Improvement Notices and 13 Prohibition Notices in the last year. 30% of the Improvement Notices and 50% of the Prohibition Notices dealt with electrical problems. The remainder were generally concerns relating to poor management and the absence of a 'competent person', suitably trained in health and safety. If you have any

concerns about how well your business complies with health and safety laws, or would like some general advice, then please ring our Occupational Health and Safety team on 01323 443302 or email: [foodandsafety@wealden.gov.uk](mailto:foodandsafety@wealden.gov.uk) Or you could assess your own compliance on the Health and Safety page of [www.wealdenbusinesshelp.org.uk](http://www.wealdenbusinesshelp.org.uk)

