



Grade Certificates

Information for Food business owners

Manukau City Council operates a system to grade food businesses based on how well food businesses comply with the requirements of the Food Hygiene Regulations 1974. Food businesses are issued with an A, B, D or E grade certificate which is sent in the mail to your premises, along with a copy of your inspection report, after your routine (initial) inspection.

The grading system was developed in order to give members of the public an indication of the level of compliance a food shop has with the regulations so they can make informed choices on where to purchase food. It is also to encourage food businesses to take more care in the way they operate their businesses to enhance food safety and so they can display a good grade to enhance their business. The grades of all food businesses are published on Manukau City Council's website for public viewing.

Display your Grade Certificate

Regardless of what grade you are given, **your current grade certificate must be displayed at all times** in a public part of the premises where it can be easily seen by your customers. Ideally it should be located so that customers can read the expiry date. Only your most current grade certificate should be displayed as your previous grades are no longer valid.

If you fail to display your current grade certificate in a suitable position you can be prosecuted for contravening the Manukau City Council Consolidated Bylaw 1992.

Grade Certificates are Council Property

Remember that the grade certificate remains the property of Manukau City Council at all times. Therefore, if you are no longer meeting the standards required for the grade that your food business holds, an Environmental Health Officer will remove your grade certificate from the premises. You will then be sent a new grade certificate in the mail to display.

How did I get a D grade?

The grading system has been designed to encourage food business proprietors to deal with any non-compliances (faults) they have been given as soon as possible and ensure that these non-compliances do not continue to occur. Therefore, if on your next routine inspection your business is found to have repeated a non-compliance that was noted at your previous inspection, this is considered a repeat fault.

One or more repeat faults will incur a D grade. D grades can also be given if you have 10 or more faults in one inspection.

Re-grade Inspections

If you have been down graded to a B, D or E grade and you wish to get a better grade before your next routine inspection in six months time, you can request a re-grade inspection. The re-grade inspection is a complete inspection, the same as an initial inspection.

You can only apply for a re-grade inspection after a period of **two (2) months** from the date of your initial inspection and you will be required to pay a fee for this inspection. In order to obtain a re-grade inspection you need to fill in a 'Request Slip for Re-grade Inspection' which will be sent to you with your grade certificate. When Council receives your request along with your paid fee the Environmental Health Officer who conducted your initial inspection will call and arrange a time for the inspection.

Remember that by having a re-grade inspection done you *will not* be guaranteed an A grade, if your food business is still not satisfactorily improved, you may still get a lower grade.

Points to Remember

- **Customers take note of grades** - there is a lot of awareness about food hygiene grades amongst members of the public and they *do* use them as a guide for where to purchase food and they *do* let Council know when grades are not displayed or not accurate.
- **You should always strive to improve your food safety standards.** Good compliance with the Food Hygiene Regulations and a well operated shop will help protect your customers from nasty food experiences and in turn give your business a good reputation.
- **It pays to be an A** - If you maintain consistent A grades you are rewarded with a 20% discount on your annual registration fees.

You should ask to speak to an Environmental Health Officer

By Phone: (09) 262 8900

By E-mail: contactus@manukau.govt.nz

This information is about the Food Grading in Food Businesses and reflects Manukau City Council's By laws, but does not replace them

Information sheet no.40
Issue 1 - August 2009