



Resort Round-up

No.16, Winter 2003

Health & Building News

Free Food Safety Seminars • Risks of Litigation

The NSW National Parks and Wildlife Service is committed to ensuring the safety of visitors to Kosciuszko National Park. As part of this commitment, the NPWS invites you to attend a food safety seminar on either.

	Mt Selwyn	Perisher Valley	Thredbo Village
Date:	Tuesday 24th June 03	Wednesday 25th June 03	Thursday 26th June 03
Time:	10:30am - 2:00pm	9:30am - 3:30pm	10:00am - 3:30pm
Venue:	Mt Selwyn Office	The Stables	Thredbo Alpine Hotel

Are you and your food premises at risk of being sued?

You may believe that none of your customers have suffered food poisoning. However, it may have occurred without them complaining to you or the Health Department. Instead they may have vowed never to return to your premises, letting their friends know as well.

In this age of litigation, you need to ensure you are not taken to court for allegedly causing harm.

You also need to ensure that your insurance company will cover you on the grounds that you had taken all reasonable means to minimise the risk of food poisoning occurring.

This is where we can help you

Should you find yourself in court defending a personal injury claim, one ally may be the food regulators themselves. If you can show that you had taken all reasonable means to ensure against a case of food poisoning or allergic reaction, the courts may take a more lenient view.

Warning

This does not mean that just by attending this seminar you are protected from litigation and that you can absolve yourself from responsibility. It means that should you be unlucky enough to have to go to court, that you would have a good case to argue 'due diligence'.

In this regard, 'due diligence' would include having a food safety plan, trained food handlers and a high level of compliance with a recent food hygiene audit.

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Could you tell the Court that:

- You don't cook bulk foods in large deep containers and leave them out at room temperature for several hours?
- You know the quality and temperature of the food that you order and that is delivered to your premises;
- You have an accurate thermometer and can prove that you knew the temperature of various foods at certain periods of the preparation process;
- You can prove that your staff have been given at least basic food safety training and that you can produce written instructions about food safety, hand washing and similar matters.

Do you have an understanding of risk management?

A quick quiz

1. Which of the following foods would you consider to be safe?
 - (a) bacon after 7 days in the fridge
 - (b) the rice for the evening meals after 2 days in a coolroom
2. Boiling food for one minute will protect my customers from food poisoning?
 - (a) true
 - (b) false
3. Boiling food for 20 minutes will render the food safe?
 - (a) true
 - (b) false
4. Which food item has caused fatal allergic reactions?
 - (a) peanut butter
 - (b) pacific salmon
5. Regulations refer to the 'danger zone'. Does this refer to:-
 - (a) the distance the food is from a gas burner
 - (b) the temperature of foods

(For answers please see the back page)

If you would like more information please contact Prasan Sharp on phone (02) 6450 5614.

Spa & Swimming Pool Operators Seminar

Snowy River Shire Council invites you to attend a Spa and Swimming Pool Operators Seminar to be held at Lake Crackenback on Thursday, 31st July 2003 from 10.00 am to 1.00 pm. A light lunch will be provided.

Mr Warren Matthews from the News South Wales Health Department will be conducting the seminar.

Attendees should bring their own spa/pool kits to the seminar.

If you would like more information please contact Gina McConkey on phone (02) 6450 5144.

Lease Audits

National Parks & Wildlife Officers from the Resorts Division will be conducting external on-site inspections as part the Lease Compliance audit process. These inspections will commence at Perisher and Smiggin Holes initially and then will eventually include Guthega and Charlotte Pass. Thredbo will be dealt with separately.

The first stage of the audit scheme will involve Service Officers inspecting each lease site and taking photos and notes and these were commenced in May, 2003 and will continue into next summer. These inspections will not require lessee representatives to be on site or to meet with Service Officers.

Apart from Lease Compliance, the photos taken will be useful for historical and heritage purposes.

Lessees were advised of the proposed inspections by Circular in April, 2003.

If you have any questions relating to these inspections or to the Lease Compliance audit process please contact Paul Hendrych, A/Manager, Commercial Properties Unit on 6450-5502.

Fire Recovery Update

Fire Trail and Asset Rehabilitation

Over 1000km of existing fire trails and over 300km of new dozer lines have been identified as requiring rehabilitation and/or recovery works in Kosciuszko National Park. More than 60% of these works have been completed with a number of sites requiring additional rehabilitation works post winter. In the Byadbo area, archaeological assessments of Aboriginal sites and identification of new sites are currently in progress.

Repairs to visitor facilities in the park have allowed most picnic areas and walking tracks to be open for public access. Some walking tracks and fire trails remain closed, as they have not yet been cleared of dangerous trees. Other areas will remain closed for longer periods of time until the vegetation has regenerated and is less sensitive to trampling. Signs warning visitors of these closures have been installed at track heads to these areas.

Over 50km of cross-country trails required the replacement of more than 350 marker poles and 1.3km of snow catch fencing within the Perisher-Smiggins resort area. Volunteers from local ski clubs and NSW Cross-Country Ski Association members played a tremendous part in assisting National Parks with this work. Due to these efforts all trails in this area will be open this winter pending a good cover of snow. Replacement of marker poles on the Goldseekers and Selwyn trails will be complete prior to winter and these trails will be open for public use.

Replacement of bridges and work on Dry Dam trail will not be undertaken until Spring 2003.

Following heritage assessments of damaged and destroyed historical huts, the removal of refuse material is now under way. Signs are currently being installed at major track heads warning visitors of the damage to these huts.

In conjunction with the Premier's Kosciuszko and Region Fire Recovery Taskforce the NPWS is currently identifying damaged fences and entering into fencing agreements with neighbours who share boundaries with the park. The Premiers Department to date has received 53 applications with over 150km of boundary fencing damaged or destroyed by the January fires. It is anticipated that all damaged fences will be repaired within the next six months.

Ecological Recovery Catchment Protection Projects

A variety of ecological projects are under way to monitor and assess the impact of fire on sensitive or threatened flora and fauna communities. This research has been funded through a generous donation from Snowy Hydro Ltd as well as from the Premiers Department bushfire recovery package.

A number of projects have commenced such as site assessments, recording the impact of wildfire on Aboriginal cultural features. Preliminary surveying of rare plant populations is complete and will be ongoing throughout Spring 2003. Studies of the Northern Corroboree Frog, Smokey Mouse and Wee Jasper Grevillia populations, as well as research into the alpine and sub-alpine plant communities, investigating impacts such as frequent fires and weed recruitment will commence this coming Spring. The establishment of breeding units for the Southern Corroboree Frog is in progress.

Members of the Kosciuszko Plan of Management Independent Scientific Committee are in the process of reviewing the current interim report investigating the possible long-term impacts of

the recent fires on the natural, cultural, recreation, economic and social values of park. This review will be complete by mid June and will be tabled in the final draft.

The CRC have completed their investigation on the effects of trampling on sub-alpine vegetation. Immediately after the fire, research was undertaken over a two-month period to examine the impact of trampling on sensitive vegetation within areas affected by recent bushfires. This research has demonstrated a considerable reduction in tolerance of such vegetation by up to 85%, which would increase the risk of soil erosion. This has led to park management to limit visitor access into sensitive areas, such as the Jagungal area, until there is a reasonable snow cover to protect the vegetation and to assist natural regeneration.

Broad-Toothed Rat Monitoring

The Snowy Mountains Region alpine ecologist has re-established the six trapping grids to monitor the impact of fire on the populations of the Broad Toothed Rat. Of the six original trapping sites, five grids have been re-established in their original position (within burnt areas), one site has been abandoned and one site has been established at a new location within an unburnt area.

The ecologist has completed his April trapping program and has made only a preliminary evaluation of the initial impact recent fires had on populations. There will be further pressures on the populations during winter with a significant reduction in vegetation cover. This lack of vegetation has not only reduced the amount of available food but also the subnivean space in which small mammals travel under the snow. Further monitoring after winter will be undertaken to investigate breeding success of remaining numbers.

Recent monitoring has also provided evidence of the survival of all previously recorded species with considerable activity by Antechinus and Bush Rats in both burnt and unburnt area. This monitoring has also led to the recording of a new Mountain Pygmy-possum site 10km north of previously recorded populations.

Quoll Trapping

A study into the potential impact of aerial wild dog baiting on Tiger Quoll populations is under investigation through a monitoring program in the Byadbo area. Over a period of two weeks in 2002, twenty-three individuals were trapped and micro chipped constituting the largest population on mainland Australia. Recent trapping of the population to investigate the impact of fire on the species saw the capture of six out of these twenty-three marked animals. There was also an additional seven unmarked individuals caught, with four being the offspring of females caught last year and three new individuals. Part of the area in which these animals survived and were breeding was where the fire intensity was extreme. Despite this fire intensity, small mammals such as native and introduced rats as well as rabbits also survived in these conditions supporting the remaining quoll population.

Feral Fauna

Cats

With a total of thirty cats caught in the Perisher Range throughout the winter period last year and another ten cats caught along the Thredbo Valley, the intention was to continue the cat trapping program over the summer months. However, due to the bushfires in Kosciuszko National Park it was not possible to undertake any trapping whilst the fires were being contained. Trapping recommenced after the main fire threat had passed from ski resort areas, in an attempt to reduce any added pressure upon threatened species and other small animals from displaced feral cats. In a two week period three cats were caught from only a small number of traps. As the mantle of snow is laid over the next few weeks, at least twenty-five cage-traps will be set in selected areas throughout and adjacent to the Perisher Range, and additional traps set within and adjacent to Thredbo Village.

Last years trapping results were exceptionally good (although the numbers were somewhat concerning) and reflected a collaborative effort amongst stakeholders, particularly Perisher Blue Pty Ltd and Kosciuszko Thredbo Pty Ltd. You too can help this winter season by reporting any cats on the contact number below. This will allow traps to be positioned where there is a greater chance of catching these feral felines.

Foxes

Fox baiting will again be undertaken this snow season across the alpine and selected higher sub-alpine areas as part of an ongoing fox control program. NPWS Alpine Ecologist – Dr Ken Green and a couple of field assistants, have routinely carried out this work each winter. The program not only includes laying hundreds of baits, but also monitoring fox numbers, movements and diet. As a top predator in the alpine area, the fox feeds on a range of native species including insects and small mammals, the latter of which includes the threatened Mountain Pygmy-possum and Broad-toothed Rat. Foxes are well adapted to live and move across a snow environment, and possess an acute sense of smell that enables them to identify and target prey living underneath the snow.

Due to the summer bushfires, baiting was conducted throughout the spring months, including lower areas of the park, to reduce the impact of the fox preying upon surviving native fauna. Additional baiting may also be continued below the snowline in selected areas throughout winter, to compliment Dr Ken Green's program and assist the recovery of other fire-affected native species.

Rabbits

This summer saw an increase in rabbit numbers in some resort areas. Due to the fires having displaced foxes and potentially cats, an attempt was made to reduce rabbit numbers so as not to attract such feral predators in areas where threatened Mountain Pygmy-possum were present. Due to Charlotte Pass Village being one of the main habitat areas of Mountain Pygmy-possum with a relatively stable population, rabbits were baited in April and May. This has reduced the rabbit population in this area and remaining numbers are likely to be kept low due to the relative harshness of the winter snow period. However, rabbits will continue to be monitored and in some areas targeted over the winter period.

Dave Woods – Resorts Environmental Liaison Officer

Ph. 6450 5616 or 0418 689 250 email: dave.woods@npws.nsw.gov.au

How Energy Efficient Are You?

There are hundreds of things you can do to be more energy efficient, ranging from simple, free adjustments to major, long-term investments. Here is a list of 10 free things that cost nothing and save cash:

1. Set heating thermostats to 20°C in winter when you're home, down to 13°C when you go to bed, and off when you're away.
2. Rather than turning up the thermostat 1°C add an extra layer of clothes or an extra blanket to your bed.
3. Close off rooms that aren't occupied.
4. Close curtains (and windows) after sunset in the winter.
5. Turn off lights when leaving a room.
6. Turn down the water heater thermostat to 48°C.
7. Re-use towels rather than daily washing them when staying in a hotel.
8. Use energy-saving settings on washing machines, clothes dryers, dishwashers, and refrigerators.
9. Don't waste water, hot or cold, inside or outside.
10. Clean your refrigerator's condenser coils once a year.

“Ranger Dave”

In the last two snow seasons, NPWS have broadcast a few key environmental and safety messages over the local radio stations of 2XL and Snow FM. However, 'Ranger Dave' is more than just a radio voice-over with sexy dulcet tones, but an opportunity for your lodge or premise to have a slide and information night at your convenience. These slide and information nights have proved popular as it allows visitors and guests of club and commercial lodges to learn more about the park, its unique flora and fauna, its long and complex history, things to do and see, and management issues. Due to the recent bushfires, a number of lodges have requested information on the impact of the fires upon the park, fire-fighting operations and post-fire recovery. These information nights are free! If you are interested or want to know more about this activity, then contact Dave Woods on phone 6450 5616 or 0418 689 250 or email: dave.woods@npws.nsw.gov.au

Top Ten Litter Items

According to Clean Up Australia, the following ten items represent about 50% of litter collected (percentage of total rubbish counted for each item is shown in brackets).

1. Cigarette butts (15%)
2. Glass bottle (6%)
3. Plastic bags (5%)
4. Small paper pieces (5%)
5. Plastic bottle caps (4%)
6. Glass pieces (4%)
7. Plastic straws (3%)
8. Soft drink cans (3%)
9. Plastic bottles (3%)
10. Plastic PET bottles (2%)

Do you know how long it takes for different types of rubbish to breakdown?

Cigarette butts	1-5 years
Plastic bags	Can take between 20 and 1000 years
Plastic film containers	20-30 years
Tin cans	50 years
Aluminium cans	80-100 years
Glass bottles	1 million years
Plastic bottles	Indefinitely

When in the snow...bins are still the go!

A reminder that the litter reduction campaign will be entering its third winter season. You can help promote the litter reduction campaign by putting up free posters and stickers around your lodge and premise. Furthermore, thousands of 'Butt-bins' have been distributed over the past couple of years and will again be distributed across the ski resorts this winter. These cigarette-butt receptacles are also available free of charge and are a practical use of recyclable and reusable film canisters. For more information on the litter reduction campaign or to pick-up posters, stickers and butt-bins, please contact the Environmental Liaison Officer, Dave Woods on 6450 5616, 0418 689 250 or email: dave.woods@npws.nsw.gov.au



Butt Bins

Perisher Range Resorts Environmental Management System Updates

2002-2003 Lodge Workbook and Summary Sheets

Although the deadline for submitting last year's EMS Lodge Workbook and summary sheets has passed, it is not too late to send them in. Please call or email Megan Bennett, our Environmental Management Officer (EMS) to let her know your progress or ask for help if needed.

Here are some tips for completing the summary sheets.

- (1) Visitor nights is the number of people who stayed at your lodge, taking into consideration multi-night stays. It is not the amount of nights your lodge was occupied, nor the amount of members that stayed at your lodge during the period. For example, if over four days your lodge had:

Thursday – 0 guests/members

Friday – 12 guests/members

Saturday – 16 guests/members

Sunday – 8 guest/member

The number of visitor nights is $0+12+16+8 = 36$ (not 3, or 16).

This number is very important. Without it we are unable to compare consumption between lodges and from year to year. For example, assuming that the lodges below only use electricity, look at the table below:

Lodge	2002-03			2003-04		
	Electricity Used (kWh)	Visitor Nights	kWh used per visitor night	Electricity Used (kWh)	Visitor Nights	kWh used per visitor night
A	86000	1750	49	90000	2000	45
B	55000	4000	14	65000	3900	17

From this example it can be shown that:

- Lodge B was more efficient in 2002-03.
- In 2003-04 Lodge A had improved it's efficiency.
- In 2003-04 Lodge B had reduced it's efficiency.

(2) Use the following units for reporting your energy use:

- Electricity - kWh
- LPG - L or kg
- Wood - tonnes or kg

(3) Don't report LPG tanks as hydrocarbon storage containers – we only want to know about liquid fuels eg heating oil and diesel.

Remember, submitting your Workbook is an easy way to satisfy the environmental component of this year's Lease Audits

EMS Operational Committee Meeting

The EMS Operational Committee met for the second time on 20 May 2003 in Jindabyne to discuss the progress of implementing the EMS. The Committee is comprised of representatives from all Perisher stakeholders: SLOPES, KCOOC, Perisher Blue, NPWS, Telstra, Elgas, Country Energy and the Nature Conservation Council. The meeting was a success with all organisations reporting progress. Please contact your EMS Committee representative for specific feedback from the meeting.

2002-2003 Objectives & Targets Report

The EMS Operational Committee agreed to produce a report on 2002-2003 progress towards EMS Objectives and Targets. NPWS is preparing the report with input from all stakeholders. The final report should be ready by 30 June.

2003-2004 Lodge Workbook

The 2003-2004 EMS Lodge Workbooks have been printed and will be distributed in June and July. There have been only minor changes to the Workbook so that you will have no trouble in completing them again this year. In addition, NPWS has commenced work on converting the summary sheets into electronic submittable forms over the Internet. It is intended that this process maintain lodge anonymity and be ready by the winter summary sheet deadline of 30 November 2003.

For all EMS issues, please don't hesitate to contact Megan Bennett, Environmental Management Officer (EMS) on (02) 6450 5607 or megan.bennett@npws.nsw.gov.au.

Answers To The Quick Quiz

1. (a); 2. (b); 3. (b); 4. (b) and 5. (b).

NPWS Website

The NPWS website has been updated and the new website address is www.nationalparks.nsw.gov.au. The NPWS website includes sections with information about ski resorts, planning for the future and the Kosciuszko Plan of Management review.

These sites contain downloadable information for the Plan of Management review and newsletters such as Resort Round Up and Moving Forward.

If you would prefer to access these newsletters electronically in the future, please notify Lisa Milne at lisa.milne@npws.nsw.gov.au and we will add your email details to our database and send electronic notification when the newsletters are available online.

This will cut down on the incredible amount of paper being used in the traditional 'print and mail' process.

If you have any other suggestions about improvements or additions to the website, please let Lisa know.