New Guideline for Temporary Food Stalls

The new Local Government Guideline for Temporary Food Stalls was launched in November by the Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) as part of Food Safety Week. The guideline has been developed in accordance with the national Food Safety Standards by environmental health practitioners from councils throughout the state and the DHHS. Designed to be used by Local Government and food stall holders, the guideline outlines the minimum requirements for the construction and operation of a stall, and the health and hygiene standards of food handlers. Previously, a number of food stall holders had commented that councils were requiring different standards for establishing stalls in the various Tasmanian municipalities. The guideline aims to improve the overall safety of foods sold to the community and ensure consistency in assessing, approving and operating temporary food stalls across the state. The guideline covers such requirements as stall construction, washing facilities, waste management, operational requirements and skills and knowledge. For a copy of the Local Government Guideline for Temporary Food Stalls, visit www.dhhs.tas.gov.au.

Council Program to Support Diverse Populations

A joint venture between the Municipal Association of Victoria, the Victorian Multicultural Commission and Local Government Victoria is being developed to assist Victorian councils to better understand and support their increasingly diverse populations. The program will deliver a cultural competence training package to focus on how councils can meet the needs of culturally and linguistically diverse populations, and also adapt to the growing diversity within the Local Government sector. A pilot program will be staged in early 2011 among four councils, and expressions of interest will be sought from other councils that would be interested in taking part in a broader program later in the year.

Trial to Promote City’s Food Outlets

A voluntary City of Sydney program will grade the food safety and hygiene standards of participating inner city cafes and restaurants, and display them on windows of the eateries. Forty-eight premises have so far committed to be part of the Scores on Doors trial with 26 scoring “A” for excellent; four recording “B” for good; and three “C” for acceptable. Only one premises is rated “P” for pending, and ratings still have to be awarded to 14 premises currently waiting for inspection. Coloured scorecards displayed at cafe and restaurant entrances give customers more information about the place they are visiting while providing an opportunity to highlight the excellent standards of the city’s food outlets. Premises with unacceptable food safety standards may be named and shamed on the New South Wales Food Authority’s register if penalty infringement notices need to be issued. For more information, visit www.cityofsydney.nsw.gov.au.
Women Benefit from Leadership Program

More women are expected to take on executive and senior management roles in Local Government across Queensland, following an 8-month LGMA leadership development program run in 12 councils. Thirty women have graduated from the Women in Local Government Mentoring Program, run by Local Government Managers Australia. The program is designed to give professional development, career advancement and networking opportunities for professional women within Local Government, and the program has helped the women develop the skills and networks they need to get into senior management roles.

Council Making full use of CBD Buildings

The City of Perth is investigating ways to make use of the upper levels of prominent CBD buildings that have become virtually ‘forgotten spaces’. Council wants to reopen the doors to these unused, or under-utilised spaces so they can attract some creative, new activity to the city centre. Lord Mayor, Lisa Scaffidi, says the areas concerned could be used for residential, retail, commercial, art and design studios. Council has already conducted feasibility studies of four buildings to see under what circumstances upper floors could be viably used. It has also had discussions with key property owners and managers to identify buildings suitable for conversion. The Council will partner with the WA Government to review any regulatory impediments to making better use of the spaces.

Councils to Launch ECO ERA Website

Seven councils in Adelaide recently launched a new website, designed to help people find ways to be more environmentally friendly. The ECO ERA - Sustainable Living Guide is packed with ideas about ways to make small changes that are good for the environment, your health and your wallet. The website shows people how they can do their bit for their environment in their neighbourhood; where they can buy locally grown food; how they can save water; and what they can do to reduce their power bills. The guide has been developed in conjunction with The Natural Strategies Group to help residents take action to live more sustainably at home and in the community. To find out more, visit www.ecoera.sa.gov.au.