



Campaigns

1.3 million
estimated cases of food poisoning
in England and Wales a year
HEALTH PROTECTION AGENCY CORPORATE PLAN

Success of pilot schemes in Scotland augurs well for rest of UK

Know the score when eating out

FOOD HYGIENE

As London prepares to launch its 'scores on the doors' scheme, new research from the Food Standards Agency (FSA) shows that Scotland's own hygiene scores pilot scheme is going down well – with consumers and businesses alike.

An overwhelming 91 per cent of consumers in the five areas in Scotland where the hygiene scores scheme has been piloted said they thought the scheme was useful to the public, with 79 per cent saying they're likely to look out for hygiene scores certificates in the future. Businesses in the areas were also impressed – 89 per cent agreed that it was fair for the public to see how they rate on hygiene, and 68 per cent even said they thought the scheme would raise standards.

The FSA is currently running pilots in cities across the East Midlands and in Hull, where early indications suggest that they are also being

positively received. Consumers in these areas can check how well a local food business has done in its last inspection, both online and via certificates on food premises.



Sourcing information about the hygiene standards of food outlets is made easier under the Food Standards Agency scheme

All this is good news for consumers, especially when you bear in mind the estimated 1.3 million cases of food poisoning in England and Wales each year.

Which? thinks that publishing food outlets' hygiene scores will drive standards up, so that fewer people will fall victim to food poisoning.

If your local council isn't publicising hygiene scores, the only way to check the hygiene standards of a local restaurant, say, is to make a Freedom of Information request. This lack of transparency makes it hard for consumers to avoid putting themselves at risk when eating out.

We'll be watching the pilot schemes closely and calling for the FSA to roll the scheme out across the UK, to ensure consumers can choose how clean their restaurant is – no matter where they live.

Go to www.which.co.uk/hygienscores for more about our campaign and the work being done by the FSA.

CAMPAIGN NEWS

iTunes complaint upheld

The European Commission has issued a formal statement of objections against Apple and four major record companies over iTunes' pricing, following our complaint in September 2005 that UK consumers are being charged more per download than consumers in Germany and France (see *Which?*, January 2007, p9).



Cosmetic code a letdown

We have accused the government of bottling out by deciding to opt for an industry code for injectable cosmetic treatments such as Botox and dermal fillers. The decision flies in the face of strong support from the industry itself for extending existing regulation to cover these treatments. We fear an industry code will add confusion and won't have the teeth to protect consumers from poor standards.

Legal services in dock

Which? has made a super-complaint to the Office of Fair Trading about the way Scottish legal services are regulated. Current rules place strict controls on how Scotland's legal professionals can practise and on the way consumers can access legal representation. We believe the structure restricts choice and may lead to higher prices, and are calling for deregulation to improve the services available to consumers.

MONEY OFF WASHING MACHINES

Great savings with Hughes Direct

This June Hughes Direct is offering Which? members exclusive discounts on selected washing machines from this month's report – see p53.

The Miele W1714 is on offer at £620, and the Miele W1514 at £530. The savings on these two Best Buy models also include delivery and a five-year warranty. The

Bosch WAE24465 is on offer at £339 – a 15 per cent discount, which also includes delivery and a two-year guarantee.

To find out more details about these offers, and other member-only discounts from Hughes Direct, log on to www.hughesdirect.co.uk/which or call 0845 678 0084.



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