

Health Licensed Slaughter Plants

Saskatchewan has three regulatory approaches to slaughter plants.

1. Plants regulated and inspected by the federal government;
2. Plants regulated and inspected by the provincial Ministry of Agriculture; and
3. Plants regulated, inspected and licensed by the Saskatchewan Health Authority (SHA).

In 2018, regulatory components for SHA licensed plants were updated and moved from The Sanitation Regulations into The Food Safety Regulations. This fact sheet will focus on an overview of SHA licensed plants and their requirements.

Slaughter Plants and Inspections

Meat and meat products are potentially hazardous foods as they can cause food borne illness, poisoning or injury. The regulatory requirements help ensure that the production of meat and meat products is done in the safest way possible.

Requirements for enhancing food safety include:

- Properly designed and constructed plants;
- Properly equipped plants;
- Hygienic slaughter and dressing procedures;
- Safe food handling practices;
- Adequate storage and refrigeration;
- Scheduled cleaning and sanitation; and
- Knowledgeable operators

Public health inspectors inspect slaughter plants to ensure they operate according to *The Food Safety Regulations*. Inspections focus on general cleanliness, proper food handling, construction and maintenance, water quality, sewage disposal systems, and temperature controls.

Key 2018 Regulation Changes

Removal of Licence Fees

The amendments remove the requirement for fees associated with the required licence for slaughter plants. Slaughter plants continue to require a licence and the requirements for a licence are outlined in *The Food Safety Regulations*.

Disclosure of Information

Allowance for public disclosure and access to slaughter plant information. Information that can be shared include the status of a licence, inspection reports, and the content of any order issued or enforcement action taken by the SHA.

Submission of Operation Information

Requirement of slaughter plant operators to submit operational information to the SHA annually as part of their applicant for renewal of license. This was added to allow for more accurate monitoring of risk. The information required includes the:

- number of animals of each species of domestic animal slaughtered during the previous year;
- number of carcasses of each species that were custom cut and wrapped during the previous year;
- number of animals of each species processed and sold through retail markets during the previous year; and
- information related to the marketing and distribution of meat products that the local authority may specify.

Key Sections in Regulations

Approval and Licensing

A slaughter plant operator must apply to the SHA for a licence. Licenses are valid for one year from the date of issue. A licence may come with operating conditions at the discretion of the SHA. The licence must be kept on display for the public.

Physical Environment and Equipment

This section outlines the requirements a facility's physical structure must have in order to facilitate cleaning and prevent the entry of pests. Equipment must be in good working order and sufficient in size and operation for the facility needs. A written cleaning schedule for the facility and equipment are required.

Handling, Preparation, Storage and Sale of Food and Water

Licensed operators must operate the facility in a sanitary manner and in a way that will prevent or minimize the risk of illness, poisoning or injury to the public. Specific temperatures for storage of potentially hazardous foods (4°C or less, or 60°C or higher), record keeping of food sources, and the ability to recall product are addressed.

Personnel

Operators of slaughter plants must ensure staff receive appropriate food safety training. High levels of personal hygiene are important as well as not working when ill with a communicable disease.

Food Safety Information

This section speaks to the types of food safety information a facility operator is required to keep and share with the SHA. It included specific requirements on information slaughter plant operators must provide to SHA annually (as mentioned above).

Public Access

Slaughter plants are considered a food facility and as such are subject to the same public disclosure as restaurants and other food facilities.

Information that can be shared publically include:

- The status of license (valid, suspended, etc.);
- Details from a complaint investigation;
- Details from any PHI inspection;
- Information related to an order or enforcement action; and
- Any charges or convictions obtained.

Slaughter Plant Standards

In addition to the amendments to the regulations, Slaughter Plant Standards have been developed to further support industry in meeting the regulatory requirements. It should also be noted that provisions of the standards become legally binding when they are attached as a condition of a license to operate.

The standards include details on construction and facility requirements, operational requirements, cleaning and sanitizing equipment, maintenance and general sanitation, and personnel. The most up to date version of the Slaughter Plant standards can be found at:

<https://www.saskatchewan.ca/residents/environment-public-health-and-safety/environmental-health/environmental-health-legislation>

More Information

Contact your local public health inspector for further information on *The Food Safety Regulations* or the Slaughter Plant Standards.

Contact information for SHA public health inspection offices is available at:

<http://www.saskatchewan.ca/residents/health/public-health/public-health-inspector>