



**Global Standard
FOOD SAFETY**

**EFFECTIVE ENVIRONMENTAL
MONITORING**



brcgs.com

Copyright and Liability

BRCGS¹ publishes information and expresses opinions in good faith but accepts no liability for any error or omission in any such information or opinion, including any information or opinion contained in this publication.

Whilst BRCGS has endeavoured to ensure that the information in this publication is accurate, it shall not be liable for any damages (including without limitation damages for pure economic loss or loss of business or loss of profits or depletion of goodwill or otherwise in each case, whether direct, indirect or consequential) or any claims for consequential compensation whatsoever (howsoever caused) arising in contract, tort (including negligence or breach of statutory duty), misrepresentation, restitution or otherwise, in connection with this publication or any information contained in it, or from any action or decision taken as a result of reading this publication or any such information.

All warranties, conditions and other terms implied by statute or common law are, to the fullest extent permitted by law, excluded.

Nothing excludes or limits the liability of BRCGS for death or personal injury caused by its negligence, for fraud or fraudulent misrepresentation or for any matter which it would be illegal for it to exclude or attempt to exclude liability for.

Effective Environmental Monitoring and the terms of the disclaimer set out above shall be construed in accordance with English law and shall be subject to the non-exclusive jurisdiction of the English Courts.

© 2022 BRCGS
ISBN: 978-1-78490-444-9

All rights reserved. No part of this publication may be transmitted or reproduced in any form (including photocopying or storage in any medium by electronic means) without the written permission of the copyright owner. Application for permission should be addressed to the Head of Publishing at BRCGS (contact details below). Full acknowledgement of the author and source must be given.

The contents of this publication cannot be reproduced for the purposes of training or any other commercial activity.

No part of this publication may be translated without the written permission of the copyright owner.

Warning: Any unauthorised act in relation to a copyright work may result in both a civil claim for damages and criminal prosecution.

Published by:
BRCGS
Second Floor
7 Harp Lane
London EC3R 6DP

Tel: +44 (0) 20 3931 8150
Email: publishing@brcgs.com
brcgs.com

¹ BRCGS is a trading name of BRC Trading Ltd. BRCGS is part of the LGC Group.

Contents

Introduction	02
Part 1: What is Environmental Monitoring	03
Bodies identifying the need for environmental monitoring	03
Part 2: The Environmental Monitoring Programme	04
Key components	04
Developing the programme	04
Areas to include	05
Site plan	05
Drains and floors	05
Air quality	05
Hygiene equipment	06
People	06
Product storage and equipment	06
Waste and waste disposal	06
Tray wash areas	06
Part 3: The Programme in Practice	07
Sampling strategies	07
Time separation	07
Testing	07
Swabbing	08
Contact plates and settle plates	08
Target organisms	08
Hygiene indicator organisms	11
Pathogens	11
Spoilage organisms	12
Prompting a review	13
Recording and evaluating	13
Control limits	13
Root cause analysis	13
Correction and corrective actions	14
Using data trends	14
Reasons for not implementing a full environmental programme	16
Part 4: Additional Reading	17
Appendix 1 - Case Study: Blitz's Bakery	18-22
Acknowledgements	
BRCGS would like to acknowledge the invaluable input and assistance from Campden BRI who have contributed to the writing of this guideline.	

Introduction

This guidance identifies the processes and activities a company should carry out to check and maintain the quality of the environment within their production facility. The regular monitoring of areas such as drains, production lines and waste routes is vital to prevent microbiological and allergen contamination of food, packaging or other products. As people can easily spread contamination it is also important that staff are made aware of their impact on the production outcomes and given appropriate training.

The guidance describes how to draw up, implement and maintain an environmental monitoring programme (EMP). The programme should be a documented plan that includes identifying areas at risk, listing the organisms liable to be present, creating a schedule for testing, recording outcomes and ensuring staff receive the appropriate training.

The publication will be useful to those responsible for the design and implementation of environmental management programmes, auditors, food safety managers, factory managers, HACCP teams as well as food and distribution teams.

The guidance will be of particular use to sites either using or working towards certification for the Global Standard Food Safety (referred to as 'the Standard'). The latest version of the Standard can be downloaded from the BRCGS website and we have indicated the sections in the Standard this guidance refers to for reference.