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Deadly times

Three people were shot over the weekend in Streetsville. **See page 3**



On the roster

The Toronto Raptors have picked up undrafted point guard Fred VanVleet to round out their roster. **See page 31**

New role

Erin Mills resident Timothy Lai plays Eric on the new City television series Second Jen. **See page 41**



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Found in an eatery near you

Skin-crawling accounts of roach infestations common in Peel restaurant closures last year

By Roger Belgrave
[@rbelgrave1](#)

Cockroaches dotted a glue trap in the kitchen of a Brampton restaurant like fresh ground pepper on a sirloin.

Peel Public Health Inspector Susana Ostrowski's report noted "moving antennae" on

about half of the 48 roaches stuck to the glue pad along a back wall in the dishwashing area.

Restaurant records indicated a pest control company had been in to spray less than three weeks ago.

But Ostrowski was seeing roaches of all sizes, both alive and dead, on traps throughout the kitchen.

Alan Clavo, a Public Health Inspector for the Environmental Health Department of the Region of Peel inspects the BriSkit Restaurant which passed with flying colours.

Rob Beintema/Metroland

She had come to the Indian Sweet Master on Ray Lawson Boulevard late last October in response to a customer's complaint about "unhygienic" conditions.

She found a laundry list of health violations, including yogurt and curry dishes sitting around at temperatures that invite bacteria,

Continued on page 16 »

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Almost 5,700 food services providers in Peel subject to scrutiny

Continued from page 1

food stored in uncovered containers, poorly maintained equipment, filthy kitchen conditions, a dishwashing machine without hot water and critically inadequate protection against pests.

The state of the restaurant that day prompted Ostrowski to issue a Section 13 order under the Ontario Health Protection and Promotion Act.

Peel health inspectors issued such orders 16 times last year – closing the doors to various retail establishments preparing and selling food under conditions considered potentially harmful to public health.

There are almost 5,700 food services providers in Peel subject to routine and complaint-based inspections by the region's public health staff.

Closures are a rare and drastic step taken to protect consumers from food-borne illnesses such as Listeria or Salmonella.

Unchecked pest infestations are the most common reason for a Section 13 order, according to Peel Director Environmental Health Paul Callanan, the person in charge of the region's health inspectors.

Most restaurant closure reports last year were rife with skin-crawling accounts of kitchens overrun by roaches.

Details of the conditions in some of those

restaurants would turn the stomachs of unsuspecting customers.

Not far from where Ostrowski encountered a rampant roach infestation at the Indian Sweet Master, a similar scene greeted her last July at another Ray Lawson Boulevard restaurant.

She went to India's Taste in response to a customer's complaint about a "slimy" ras malai dish.

Ostrowski's report noted that at

the time of inspection the dish appeared fine, but she found several dishes kept at unsafe temperatures, plant debris in uncovered food, flies circling the buffet bar as well as a thriving cockroach population.

She noticed roaches, some dead and others showing signs of life, mired in glue traps stuck to the wall above the food preparation table.

"I observed two cockroaches running up the leg of a storage unit with bagged potatoes and onions," she wrote in her report.

The food safety violations and pest control issue were enough for Ostrowski to close the restaurant while customers were still dining.

"I asked the owner to prevent new customers from coming in," she noted.

Customers already at tables were left to finish their meals, according to health department inspection reports obtained through a Freedom of Information request.

It was a customer complaint about seeing a cockroach on the store counter and in food at the Bombay Chaat that brought Inspector Teddy Alivio to the Mississauga restaurant last December.

He found a roach problem considered serious enough to immediately close the Shepard Avenue takeout in the Newin Centre Mall food court.

The insects, which health officials consider mechanisms for transporting disease, were spotted scurrying across the floor, kitchen counter, a chopping board and utensils as well as inside a pot and floating in a bowl of soaking beans.

"At least four adult cockroaches and 50 nymph cockroaches observed on the wood-en counter table located at the back area of

HIGH-RISK

3 TIMES
A YEAR

MEDIUM-RISK

2 TIMES
A YEAR

LOW-RISK

1 TIME
A YEAR

the kitchen where utensils and other food containers are stored," Alivio recorded in his report.

A complaint about cockroaches and poor food handling sent Inspector Alan Clavo to the Tandoori Flame on Dixie Road in Brampton last October.

According to the closure report, the premises were in a state of general disrepair and

a cockroach infestation posed a "critical risk" to the health of customers in the poplar restaurant.

Roaches "at all life cycles" were found in the kitchen and dining area.

"Found two live

nymphs and an egg capsule in the cabinet below the salad bar," Clavo's report noted.

It was a four-legged pest that caught the eye of Inspec-

I observed two cockroaches running up the leg of a storage unit with bagged potatoes and onions.

— Susana Ostrowski/ Peel Public Health Inspector —

Who's at risk? Food establishments fall into one of three inspection categories, dictating how often Peel Health inspectors will conduct routine visits in a 12-month period. High, medium and low-risk premises are inspected three times, two times and once a year respectively.

tor Dennis Persaud during a routine visit to Mississauga's Vienna Bakery last November.

He saw mouse droppings throughout the Torbram Road premises, including the food preparation and storage areas.

"A dead mouse seen in an empty plastic pail located in the sprinkler/water meter room. A live mouse seen running on the floor in one of the electrical room," confirmed a rodent problem and resulted in a closure order.

A food safety report also noted operators of the bake shop were storing vehicle tires and rims, brake pads, lumber, old cabinets and other material on

the premises that provided "harbourages" for rodents and other pests.

Disease-carrying cockroaches and rodents are the most common impetus for restaurant closures in Peel.

However, failing to keep foods either cold or hot

enough to inhibit disease-causing bacteria growth or failing to ensure premises have hot running water to carry out proper hand washing and sanitation can be just as critical health hazards, explained Callanan.

The businesses closed last year all reopened within days, after taking steps to address the issues identified by inspectors and passing re-inspection.

Bugs crawl through dirty stuff, then the food

Cockroaches are a significant health concern because the insects are considered "mechanisms" for the transmission of disease.

"In other words, they have an exoskeleton and they crawl through dirty stuff, they get into food, the dirty stuff gets into the food," explained Paul Callanan, environmental health director at Peel Health.

Things like salmonella can be transferred onto surfaces that come into contact with food or food itself.

One cockroach or even a couple of cockroaches are not likely to transmit an infectious dose, according to Callanan. Just a few

bacteria that would come off their body.

The food the insects come into contact with would then have to be held at the wrong temperature for an inordinate period of time so bacteria could incubate and get to a dose large enough to make someone sick, Callanan explained.

The other thing is bacteria are not evenly distributed throughout the food.

So, 10 people could eat the same dish and only three of them would get sick.

Cockroaches are a critical concern when there is a significant infestation that is left unchecked by pest control methods.



Paul Callanan

Closures in 2015

- **Orcel Asian Cuisine**, 3 Charles St., Brampton – no hot water
- **Thinusha Takeout and Catering**, 107 Kennedy Rd. S., Brampton – pest infestation
- **Indo Canadian Food Hut**, 373 Steeles Ave. W., Brampton – poor food storage, housekeeping
- **Bombay Chaat**, 2580 Shepard Ave. E., Mississauga – pest infestation
- **Lena's Roti and Doubles**, 2565 Steeles Ave. E., Brampton – pest infestation
- **Alima Foods**, 13 Kenview Blvd., Brampton – poor housekeeping, pest infestation
- **China Sea Chinese Foods**, 2897 Derry Rd. E., Mississauga – pest infestation
- **Randy's Roti and Doubles**, 2903 Derry Rd. E., Mississauga – poor housekeeping, pest infestation
- **B's Sizzling Kitchen**, 7885 Tranmere Dr., Mississauga – poor housekeeping, pest and rodent infestation
- **Cordoba Coffee and Tea Co.**, 7205 Goreway Dr., Mississauga – pest infestation
- **Vienna Bakery**, 7079 Torbram Rd., Mississauga – poor housekeeping, rodent infestation
- **Indian Sweet Master**, 503 Ray Lawson Blvd., Brampton – poor food storage and housekeeping, pest infestation
- **Queen Flea Market**, 255 Queen St. E., Brampton – no hot water
- **Hot Grill Takeout**, 3899 Trelawney Circle, Mississauga – poor food storage, sanitary conditions
- **India's Taste**, 900 Ray Lawson Blvd., Brampton – poor food storage, pest infestation
- **Tandoori Flame**, 8150 Dixie Rd., Brampton – poor building maintenance, pest infestation

Most restaurants closed by Peel Health address concerns and reopen

By Roger Belgrave
@rbelgrave1

Most restaurant closure reports read like excerpts from the nightmares diners suppress when they choose to feed themselves at the hands of strangers.

Cockroach infestations, unsanitary cooking environments and poor hygiene practices among kitchen staff are often included in the food safety violations Peel Health inspectors find when issuing a Section 13 order to close an establishment.

Just last month, the health department closed an Oceans Fresh Food Market location in Mississauga.

The supermarket, located at 4557 Hurontario St., was shutdown under the Ontario Health Protection and Promotion Act due to a cockroach infestation.

The store reopened the next day, after having a pest control company in to treat the premises.

It was the latest of nine food establishment closures ordered so far this year in Peel.

To date, health inspectors have also issued about 224 conditional passes to operators.

There are almost 5,700 food service providers in Peel subject to routine and complaint-based inspections by the region's public health staff.

Closure orders are rare – only 16 were issued in 2015.

Most businesses take steps to address the issues identified by health officials and after re-inspection are reopened for business within days.

“Generally speaking places reopen. There are places that sort of give up and often it’s due to financial problems,” explained Peel Director Environmental Health Paul

Callanan, who is in charge of the region’s health inspectors. “Often they can’t do what’s needed to be done in order to meet their requirements of the regulations.”

Operators of the Tandoori Flame in Brampton spent \$1.1 million in major renovations to help make sure the problems that closed the popular Dixie Road restaurant last year were addressed for the long-term.

According to the closure report, the premises were in a state of general disrepair and had a cockroach infestation that posed a “critical risk” to the health of customers.

The restaurant, which serves about 3,000 customers a week, was only closed for a day to have a pest control company come in and spray, said Shraey Gulati, one of the owners of the family run business that operates a second location in Mississauga.

Peel health advised the family to repair walls, floors and ceilings as well as call in pest control.

Gulati said the family decided to close the restaurant this past April to carry out the renovations.

Maintaining sanitary conditions on a daily basis and repairing structural issues were part of the long-term strategy to address the issues identified by Peel

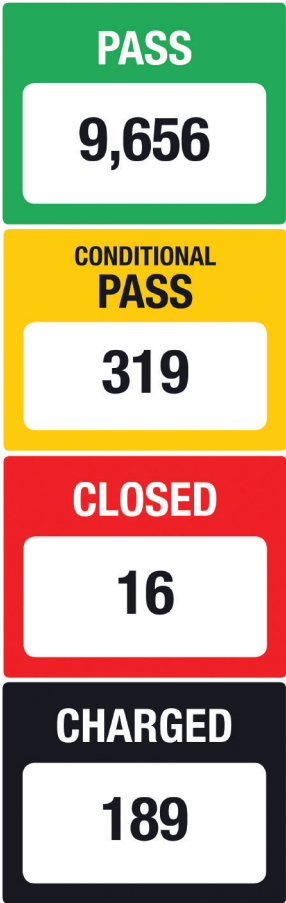
Health in the decades-old building, he explained.

“It’s completely a brand new restaurant,” Gulati remarked.

He admits it is sometimes challenging to maintain facilities to regulatory standards.

However, he emphasized, the family’s restaurant has never had a food poisoning incident in eight years of operation.

“The health inspection, which happens



The vast majority of food establishments in Peel regularly get a health inspector's stamp of approval to continue operating. In 2015, inspectors issued 9,656 pass signs, 319 conditional passes and closed 16 premises and laid 189 food safety charges under public health protection legislation.



Closures in 2016 (year to date)

- **Popeye's Chicken and Seafood**, 269 Queen St. E., Brampton – unsanitary conditions, pest infestation
 - **Oceans Fresh Food Market Supermarket**, 4557 Hurontario St., Mississauga – pest infestation
 - **Twice The Deal Pizza**, 3115 Winston Churchill Blvd., Mississauga – poor housekeeping, pest infestation
 - **Allspice Bakery Café**, 3115 Winston Churchill Blvd., Mississauga – unsanitary conditions, poor housekeeping
 - **Ardglen Bakery**, 85 Clarence St., Brampton – poor housekeeping, unsanitary conditions, pest infestation hazardous food temperatures
 - **Lian Jiang Li Bakery**, 50 Kennedy Rd. S., Brampton – unsanitary conditions, pest infestation
 - **Tabaq Restaurant**, 2580 Shepard Ave. E., Mississauga – unsanitary conditions, pest infestation
 - **Taco Bell**, 25 Peel Centre Dr., Brampton – poor housekeeping, unsanitary conditions, pest infestation
 - **Gore Meat Shop**, 4525 Ebenezer Rd., Brampton – poor sanitation, hazardous food temperatures, pest infestation
 - **Spring Rolls**, 25 Peel Centre Dr., Brampton – premises no longer operating
 - **Biryani King**, 40 Gillingham Dr., Brampton – unsanitary conditions, poor housekeeping, pest infestation
 - **747 Flea Market, The Cake and Pastry Shop**, 73 Parkhurst Sq., Brampton – did not provide proper sinks, labeling for food and/or chemicals, accurate and easy-to-read thermometers, sufficient sanitizing supplies
- All establishments have since had follow-up inspections and reopened. However, Spring Rolls is no longer operating.*

Peel Health inspections serving up restaurant diners food for thought

By Roger Belgrave
[@rbelgrave1](#)

Anyone who has eaten in a restaurant, picked up a meal at a drive-thru or ordered takeout has likely spent more time wondering about the calorie counts in menu options than details in the food establishment's last public health inspection report.

But no amount of exercise can burn off food-borne illnesses diners may pick up with the cheque for a meal improperly cooked, prepared in unsanitary conditions or made with contaminated ingredients.

Food-borne diseases – such as Salmonella, Norovirus, Listeria and Botulism – can cause nausea, vomiting, stomach cramps, diarrhea, long-term health problems and in some cases even death.

Menus and wait staff never mention the bacteria, parasites, viruses, pests, toxins or chemicals that often find their way into restaurant kitchens and may threaten the health of unsuspecting patrons.

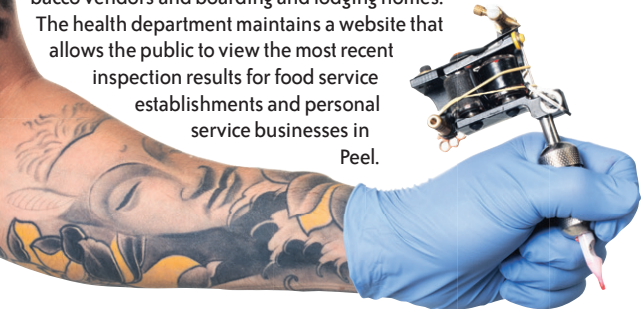
Every year, an estimated four million Canadians suffer food poisoning. Many of them fall ill from meals ordered at their neighbourhood eatery.

There are 50 health inspectors assigned to monitor conditions in the almost 5,700 food establishments operating in Peel Region.

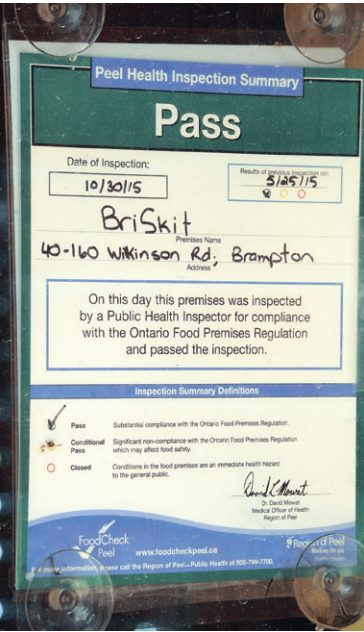
Tattoo parlours, beauty salons and other personal services subject to Peel Health inspections

In addition to restaurants, Peel Health regularly inspects personal service businesses, which include tattoo parlours, barbers, hair salons, beauty treatment operations and nail salons. In these Personal Services Settings (PSS), health inspectors focus on blood borne diseases and fungal risks. Health officials are concerned with issues such as proper sterilization of equipment and head lice in barbershops and hairdressing salons. Personal services have best practices under the Ministry of Health and Long-term Care and are regulated under regional bylaws. Before 1998, these types of businesses were not inspected on a regular basis.

There are about 1,250 personal services establishments in Peel. In 2015, inspectors closed three establishments and issued 1,225 green pass inspection signs, 45 yellow conditional signs and two charges. Peel Health also inspects recreational pools, spas, tanning salons, tobacco vendors and boarding and lodging homes. The health department maintains a website that allows the public to view the most recent inspection results for food service establishments and personal service businesses in Peel.



Peel Health staff visit restaurants, fast food joints, banquet halls, caterers, grocery stores, daycares, convenience stores, schools, health care facilities and other premises where food is either prepared or offered prepackaged for public consumption.



Inspectors, who juggle other public health responsibilities, routinely encounter everything from sloppy sanitation practices to pest infestations in their unannounced visits to these food service establishments.

Depending on what public health staff uncovers, those establishments are issued either green pass signs, yellow conditional passes or red closure orders.

Operators are required to post those colour-coded inspection notices at entrances to their businesses for the public to see.

According to Peel director environmental health Paul Callanan, the person in charge of the region's health inspector corps, the vast majority of establishments in Peel pass regular inspection and are issued green signs.

"There's about six per cent of food places that

are considered that have a conditional pass or closed sign at any point and time," he estimated.

In 2015, the region issued 9,656 pass signs, 319 conditional passes and closed 16 premises due to unhealthy conditions, while laying 189 food safety charges under public health protection legislation.

The public is free to view the most recent inspection results for food service establishments in Peel on a website portal maintained by the health department.

Surveying that database, it's clear most restaurants have Peel Public Health's approval to conduct business.

But even those establishments permitted to continue serving food often have less than stellar inspection reports.

"In food premises, there is always going to be something that is amiss when a public health inspector goes in," said Callanan.

Despite the green pass sign posted at their favourite eatery, many residents might be surprised and perhaps troubled by some findings during the establishment's last inspection.

Common inspector observations in kitchens issued the green light to continue serving food include:

- employees not washing their hands;

- food kept at temperatures that invite bacteria growth;
- dirty surfaces, equipment, dishes and utensils;
- no hot or cold running water;
- poor housekeeping;
- and inadequate pest control.

Often, identified concerns can be rectified while inspectors are still on the premises or within hours, according to Callanan.

Even when a conditional pass is issued, operators continue to serve clientele and typically get 72 hours to address the matters of greatest concern before a follow-up inspection is conducted.

"If it's a critical item that is likely, if they continue operating in that way, to cause illness then we would close the premises down," Callanan explained.

"A severe infestation or cockroach infestation where food is likely to be contaminated by the pests, is probably the most common (cause for closure) in Peel," he revealed.

Pests are a common and often unavoidable reality in the food service industry, according to Callanan, and infestation is not always cause for closure.

"You have a food court for example, in a mall, if one place imports cockroaches, it doesn't take very long for it to get to a number of places because they're all adjoining," he noted.

If an operator has a pest control company on retainer and is taking steps to keep pests under control, public health officials generally allow establishments to stay open.

Rampant and unchecked infestation is what typically shuts down a business. According to Callanan, Peel Public Health generally takes a "progressive enforcement approach" to dealing with violations.

Inspectors often issue conditional passes and provincial offences tickets, with increasing fines, in most cases where worrisome or significant health concerns are found.

Set fines range from \$45 to \$370, with additional surcharges for court costs.

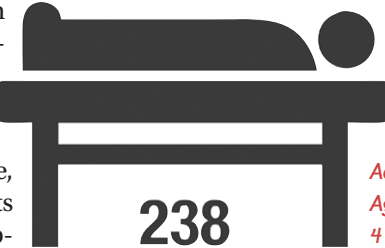
The health department's disclosure website gives the public a window into restaurant kitchens, Callanan suggested.

It empowers the public by allowing them to make more informed choices about the establishments they wish to patronize, he said.

"You can log onto whatever your favourite restaurant is and look at the inspection history and if it varies between a green sign and yellow sign, I would wonder about that kind of establishment," Callanan said.



4 million (1 in 8) affected



238 died

11,600 hospitalized

According to the Public Health Agency of Canada, every year, about 4 million (1 in 8) Canadians are affected by a food-borne illness. About 11,600 of these people are hospitalized and 238 die, according to the health agency's statistics. Most experts and health officials agree food poisoning remains a vastly under reported illness.