

Rodent dropping found on floor of Iceland supermarket in Co Wexford

The Food Safety Authority had to close three premises last month due to rodent infestation

By Claire Gorman

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Three food businesses with evidence of rodents on the premises were ordered to shut last month, it emerged on Thursday.

Rodent droppings were discovered on the shop floor of an Iceland supermarket in Gorey Retail Park in Co Wexford.

The enforcement order stated that there was “evidence of gnawing to the packaging of numerous multi-pack packets of crisps on the shelving for sale in the shop floor area”.

It added: “Pieces of gnawed crisps packaging were observed amongst rodent droppings on the shelving in the shop floor area.

“There was evidence of gnawing to numerous individual packets of crisps within multi-packs of crisps for sale.

“Upon further examination, rodent droppings were observed within the packaging of the multi-packs of crisps and within the individual packets of crisps in the multi-packs.”

The report said the violations were a “grave and immediate danger to public health”.

A canteen run by Get Fresh Catering in Beaufort College, Navan, Co Meath was closed due to inadequate pest controls and a “heavy mouse infestation”.

AD Cash and Carry, St James Industrial Park in Inchicore, Dublin 8 was also forced to shut due to a “significant number of rodent droppings” found throughout the premises.

Food Safety Authority CEO Pamela Byrne warned that rodents are a huge risk to public health.

She added: “The three closure orders in November cited inadequate procedures in pest control which resulted in evidence of rodents in all three premises.

“This is not acceptable in any food business at any time, as it poses a serious risk to public health.

“Food businesses need to ensure that their premises has the right food safety management procedures in place to ensure pest control at all times.”

She said that food businesses must prioritise food safety in their businesses, particularly in the lead up to Christmas.

Dr Byrne added: “Also, with the busy Christmas season well underway, food businesses must ensure that they can cope with the extra customer demand and must recognise the main food safety risk factors that can cause foodborne illness and are easily preventable.

“For example, poor hygiene in food premises; inadequate refrigeration; inadequate cooking or re-heating; cross-contamination from raw to cooked food; contaminated raw ingredients; inadequately trained or supervised staff.”