

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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FOOD SAFETY TIPS FOR SUMMER TIME

Eau Claire, WI- June 21st, 2016- During this busy summer season of picnics, barbeques, and other activities involving food the Eau Claire City-County Health Department would like to remind everyone about important ways to keep your food safe. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) estimates that each year 17,000 residents in Eau Claire County will become sick from consuming unsafe food. With warmer temperatures, foodborne illness rates increase in the summer. Warmer temperatures can cause the number of bacteria in food to double in as little as 20 minutes! “The most important thing to remember to keep your food safe this summer is to keep cold foods cold and hot foods hot,” says Iris Lang, Environment Health Specialist. See additional tips below.

When bringing food to a picnic, barbeque, or other event without a refrigerator:

- Use insulated coolers and fill with ice or ice packs. A full cooler stays cold longer.
- Avoid opening coolers repeatedly and use separate coolers for food and drinks.
- **Keep cold food cold including:** raw meat, poultry, and seafood, deli meats and sandwiches, summer salads (pasta salad, potato salad, etc.), cut fruits and vegetables, and dairy products

When cooking food on the grill:

- Use separate cutting boards and utensils for raw meat and foods that won't be cooked such as bread, fruit, and summer salads.
- Use a thermometer to check your food temperatures.
 - Chicken: 165°F
 - Beef: 155°F
 - Ground meats: 155°F
 - Pork: 145°F
 - Fish and Seafood: 145°F
- Use clean plates and utensils for cooked meat. Don't use the same utensils that were used for raw meat for other food.
- **Keep hot food hot.** Food can be moved to the side of grill to keep warm until serving.

When serving food outdoors:

- Perishable food should not sit out for more than two hours or one hour if it is 90 degrees or above.
- Refrigerate leftovers quickly. If perishable foods are out for longer than the times listed above, throw it away.

Outdoor handwashing:

- Wash your hands often when cooking and handling food, especially in between handling raw meat and ready to eat foods.
- If you don't have access to running water, you can use a water jug, soap, and paper towel. You can also use moist disposable towelettes to clean your hands.

For more information on how to keep your food safe, visit <http://www.cdc.gov/foodsafety/index.html>.

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