



KILLINGWORTH HEALTH DEPARTMENT

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Press Release

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Food Safety When Grilling Outdoors

The Killingworth Health Department wants to remind residents about food safety when grilling outdoors.

Food safety is just as important when you're cooking outside as it is when you're cooking inside. Following a few simple steps can help ensure the success of your barbecues and picnics.

Here are some food safety tips for grilling outdoors:

- **Wash hands** - Wash hands for 20 seconds with soap and water and dry your hands with a paper towel following restroom use, before preparing foods, after handling raw meat or before eating. Be sure to wash hands thoroughly after handling raw meat products and before handling other foods. Clean hands will help prevent the spread of potentially illness-causing microorganisms.
- **Clean** - Wash food-contact surfaces often with warm soapy water. Bacteria can spread and get onto cutting boards, knives and counter tops. Wash fruits and vegetables before preparing.
- **Separate utensils** - Be sure to use separate plates and utensils for cooked and uncooked foods. Bacteria from uncooked meats and poultry can be dangerous if they contaminate cooked food. Don't reuse marinade – discard after food is removed for cooking. If basting is required, use a freshly prepared marinade.
- **Take temperatures** - Cook food thoroughly. The most common minimum internal cooking temperatures are 158 degrees Fahrenheit for hamburgers, 145 degrees Fahrenheit for steaks and ribs, and 165 degrees Fahrenheit for poultry. Be sure to use a food thermometer to check temperatures.
- **Keep it cold (or hot)** - Keep cold food refrigerated until it is ready to be placed on the grill. Consume immediately or hold hot on the grill. Do not hold cooked foods at room temperature. Cooked, hot foods should be kept at 140 degrees Fahrenheit or warmer. Cold foods should be kept below 45 degrees Fahrenheit.
- **Don't cook if sick**- Most importantly, let someone else prepare the food if you have, or recently had, symptoms of vomiting or diarrhea. Foodborne illness is easily spread from people to food when those with even mild symptoms unknowingly contaminate food.

For more information about food safety contact the Killingworth Health Department at (860) 663-1765, x223 or visit the CT Department of Public Health, Food Protection Program website at www.ct.gov/dph/foodprotection or call them at (860) 509-7297.