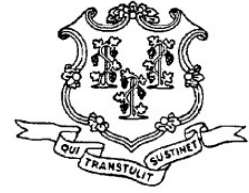


News



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DPH Reminds Residents of Food Safety When Grilling Outdoors

Hartford – As you celebrate the Fourth of July, the Connecticut Department of Public Health (DPH) reminds the public to keep food safety in mind when grilling outdoors.

“Barbecues and picnics can be a big part of our Fourth of July celebrations,” said DPH Commissioner Dr. Jewel Mullen. “Whether you’re outside on the grill or cooking indoors, it’s important to keep food safety in mind to prevent foodborne illness.”

Here are some food safety tips for grilling this summer:

- **Wash hands** - Wash hands for 20 seconds with soap and water, and dry 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.

For more information and free literature about food safety, contact the DPH Food Protection Program at (860) 509-7297 or visit them online at www.ct.gov/dph/foodprotection.

The Connecticut Department of Public Health is the state’s leader in public health policy and advocacy with a mission to protect and promote the health and safety of the people of our state. To contact the department, please visit its website at www.ct.gov/dph or call (860) 509-7270.