

## Henry County Health Department

1201 Race Street, Suite 208  
New Castle, Indiana 47362-4653  
765.521.7056 [office] 765.521.7057 [fax]  
henryco.net



# Food Safety Hints for Non-Profit Organizations

**Cooking.** Use a food thermometer to check on cooking and holding temperatures of potentially hazardous foods. All potentially hazardous foods should be kept at 41°F or below (if cold) or 140°F or above (if hot). Ground beef and ground pork products should be cooked to an internal temperature of 155°F, poultry parts should be cooked to 165°F. Most foodborne illnesses from temporary events can be traced back to lapses in temperature control.

**Reheating.** Rapidly reheat potentially hazardous foods to 165°F. Do not attempt to heat foods in crock pots, steam tables, over *sterno* units or with other hot holding devices. Slow-cooking mechanisms may activate bacteria and may never reach killing temperatures. Make sure to monitor proper temperatures.

**Cooling and Cold Storage.** Foods that require refrigeration must be cooled to 41°F as quickly as possible and held at that temperature until ready to serve. To cool foods down quickly, use an ice water bath (60% ice to 40% water), stir the product frequently, or place the food in shallow pans no more than 4 inches in depth and refrigerate. Pans should not be stored one atop the other and lids should be off or ajar until the food is cooled. Check the temperature periodically to see if the food is cooling properly. Allowing hazardous foods to remain unrefrigerated for too long has been the number ONE cause of foodborne illness.

**Handwashing.** Frequent and thorough handwashing remains the first line of defense in preventing foodborne disease. The use of disposable gloves (or hand sanitizers) can provide an **additional barrier** to contamination, but they are no substitute for handwashing! Handwashing should be made available in the actual area during any event/project where open foods are being handled.

**Health & Hygiene.** Only healthy workers/students should handle, prepare, and serve food. Anyone who shows symptoms of disease (cramps, nausea, fever, vomiting, diarrhea, jaundice, etc.) or who has open sores or infected cuts on the hands should not be allowed to participate in any event involving open food handling. Workers/Students should wear clean outer

garments and should not smoke or consume food in the event/project area. The use of hair restraints is recommended to prevent unwanted hair ending up in food products.

**Food Handling.** Avoid bare hand contact with raw, ready-to-eat foods and food contact surfaces. Use an acceptable dispensing utensil or glove to handle or serve food. Touching food with bare hands can transfer germs to food. Ice. Ice used to cool cans/bottles should not be used in cup beverages and should be stored separately. Use a scoop to dispense ice; never use the hands. Ice can become contaminated with bacteria and viruses and cause foodborne illness.

**Wiping Cloths.** Rinse and store your wiping cloths in a bucket of sanitizer (example: 1 gallon of water and 1/2 teaspoon of chlorine bleach). Change the solution every two hours. Well sanitized work surfaces prevent cross-contamination and discourage flies when operating outdoors.

**Insect Control and Waste.** Keep foods covered to protect them from insects when operating outdoors. Store pesticides away from food. Place garbage and paper wastes in a refuse container with a tight-fitting lid. Dispose of wastewater in an approved method (do not dump it outside). All water used should be potable water from an approved source.

**Food Storage and Cleanliness.** Keep foods stored off the floor/ground at least 6 inches. After your event is finished, clean the project/concession area and discard unusable food.

**Dishwashing.** Use disposable utensils for food service. Keep your hands away from food contact surfaces, and never reuse disposable dishware. Ideally, dishes and utensils that will be re-used (or are used in your food preparation processes) should be washed in a 4-step process: (1) washing in hot, soapy water; (2) rinsing in clean water; (3) chemical or heat sanitizing; (4) and air drying.

