

ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH **IMPORTANT ADVICE FOR BARBECUES**

(Businesses, Charities and Voluntary Organisations)



The main causes of food poisoning are:-

1. Spread of germs from raw meat or dirt to cooked and ready to eat food

- keep raw and cooked meats apart during preparation storage and cooking
- always have separate utensils for raw and cooked meat:-
never handle cooked foods with utensils which have touched raw meats
- set up your barbecue to prevent crossovers between cooked and raw meat handling i.e.
have separate work surface / storage areas for raw meat and cooked food
- thoroughly clean all utensils and work surfaces before and after using a commercial combined detergent sanitiser available from the Cash and Carry (domestic washing up liquid doesn't kill germs)
- **wash hands after handling raw meat and before handling ready to eat foods**
- food handlers must have convenient access to a WHB with warm water, soap (preferably bactericidal) and towels
- **ideally have two people on duty, one handling only raw meat and one handling only cooked foods / rolls etc**
- wash salads and raw vegetables
- keep food covered until needed - cover serving bowls to protect from dust and insects
- wear protective (non flammable) clothing e.g. a white cotton apron

2. Survival of germs in under cooked or re-heated food

- light the barbecue well in advance – make sure you have enough charcoal
- don't start cooking until the charcoal is glowing red with a powdery grey surface
- thoroughly defrost raw meats before cooking (unless cooking instructions state otherwise)
- cook food thoroughly, following the instructions on pack
- ensure all meats are thoroughly cooked (75°C*) – never eat rare meats
(NB – contrary to previous advice, the absence of pink bits in burgers is not in itself a guarantee of safety)
- turn food regularly to ensure even cooking
- poultry portions (especially on the bone) is-are particularly difficult to barbecue safely from raw and should be avoided
- re-heated food must be piping hot all the way through (82°C*)

3. Growth of germs in warm food

- keep all meat, dairy and egg products in the fridge (1 - 4°C*) or cool box (with frozen ice packs) until needed
- cooked food must be:- eaten straight away or
kept piping hot (63°C*) while awaiting service or
cooled quickly (within 1½ hrs) then placed in the fridge
- if taking food home, keep cool and put in the fridge as soon as possible
- throw out all perishable food that's been lying out for more than 2 hours

4. Infection from food handlers

- if you have a stomach upset, sickness or diarrhoea – don't handle food
- always wash your hands after visiting the toilet
- cover all cuts and boils with a waterproof dressing

* It is advisable to buy a probe thermometer to allow regular checks to be made of the key areas of temperature control

For assistance or advice - phone 01786 443322 and ask to speak to an officer from the Food Safety Team