



Butte-Silver Bow Health Department

25 W. Front St., Butte MT 59701-2801

(406) 497-5020 Fax: (406) 497-5095

<http://www.co.silverbow.mt.us/135/Health>

Prevent. Promote. Protect.

SAFE FOOD FACT SHEET

BARBECUE BASICS: GUIDELINES TO PREVENT FOODBORNE ILLNESS

- It's the season for picnics, cookouts, and other outdoor parties. But eating outdoors in warm weather presents a food safety challenge. Bacteria in food multiply faster at temperatures between 41°F and 135°F, so summer heat makes the basics of food safety especially important. The following are simple steps that consumers can take to keep family and friends from becoming ill.

WASH HANDS.

- It seems basic, but not everyone does it. Wash your hands thoroughly and often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds, especially after using the bathroom and before cooking or eating. If you're in an outdoor setting with no bathroom, use a water jug, some soap, and paper towels.

KEEP RAW FOOD SEPARATE FROM COOKED FOOD.

- Don't use a plate that previously held raw meat, poultry, or seafood for anything else unless the plate has first been washed in hot, soapy water and then properly sanitized. Keep all utensils and surfaces clean.

MARINATE FOOD IN THE REFRIGERATOR, NOT OUT ON THE COUNTER.

- And if you want to use some of the marinade as a sauce on the cooked food, set aside a separate portion. Never reuse marinade that contained raw meat.

COOK FOOD THOROUGHLY.

- To kill any harmful bacteria that may be present, ensure that foods are cooked to a proper temperature through the use of a food thermometer. Hamburgers should be cooked to 155°F for 15 seconds. Chicken should be cooked to at least 165°F for 15 seconds. If you partially cook food in the microwave, oven, stove, etc. to reduce grilling time, do so immediately before the food goes on the hot grill.

REFRIGERATE AND FREEZE FOOD PROMPTLY.

- It can be hard to remember while a party is going on, but food should not be left out of the cooler or off the grill for more than two hours. Never leave food out for more than one hour when the temperature is above 90°F.

KEEP HOT FOOD HOT.

- Hot food should be kept at or above 135°F. Hot food should be wrapped well and placed in an insulated container. If bringing hot take-out food such as fried chicken or barbecue to an outdoor party, eat it within two hours of purchase. In addition to bringing a grill and fuel for cooking to an outdoor location, remember to pack a food thermometer to check that your meat and poultry reach a safe internal temperature. When re-heating food at the outing, be sure it reaches 165°F within 2 hours.

KEEP COLD FOOD COLD.

- Cold food should be held at or below 41°F. Foods like chicken salad and desserts that are in individual serving dishes can be placed directly on ice or in a shallow container set in a deep pan filled with ice. Drain off water as ice melts and replace ice frequently.