NCHD Reminder About Food Safety During Upcoming City-Wide Sale

It’s time for Missouri’s largest garage sale again! Newton County Health Department (NCHD) would like to remind everyone that while it’s fun to sell hotdogs and other food items during a sale, following food safety requirements is of the utmost importance in order to prevent a foodborne illness outbreak. Delbert Anderson, Environmental Supervisor at NCHD says, “It is impossible for us to be able to conduct inspections on every personal temporary food stand that goes on during the garage sale. Providing this information is intended to educate people on how to handle food properly to prevent a problem later.”

Temporary Food Service Guidelines
Temporary operations often require that the food service is set up out-of-doors or in locations where keeping foods safe and sanitary is challenging. Food service operators should have a basic understanding of how improper handling of Potentially Hazardous Foods (PHFs) and poor hygiene can cause a foodborne illness. PHFs are foods (such as meat or dairy products) that must be kept hot or cold because they are capable of supporting the rapid growth of bacteria that cause foodborne illnesses. By following these guidelines, temporary food service operators can minimize the possibility of a foodborne illness occurrence.

The following actions and equipment are recommended for all temporary food operations.

- **HAND SINK.** Adequate hand washing facilities consist of a handsink equipped with hot and cold running water, soap and paper towels. A temporary sink set-up can be made that consists of a vessel full of water with a spigot type dispenser, soap, paper towels, a wastebasket and a bucket to collect wastewater.

  Remember to wash hands: before starting or returning to work, after eating, smoking, or using the restroom, when changing duties, before putting on gloves and whenever hands become soiled. The use of gloves or hand sanitizers is not a substitute for handwashing.

- **WASTEWATER.** Wastewater needs to be disposed of through an approved sanitary sewage system or septic system.

- **BARE HAND CONTACT.** A food employee’s bare hands may not touch ready-to-eat-foods. Tongs, spatulas, deli tissues, or gloves must be used.

- **FOOD.** All foods and beverages are to be prepared on-site or at a food establishment currently under inspection.

- **COOKING.** An essential part of food safety is assuring that proper final cooking temperatures are met. Proper cooking temperatures for some common foods are:
  - Chicken: 165°F
  - Hamburgers: 155°F
  - Pork: 145°F
  - Fish/seaweed: 145°F.

- **HOT AND COLD HOLDING.** Sufficient equipment that is capable of keeping foods hot (i.e. grills, steam table with heat source) and/or cold must be provided. Mechanical refrigeration or ice is needed for cold foods. Refrigerators and freezers should be clean and contain thermometers. Coolers must be
cleanable and have a drain. Hot foods are kept at 135°F or hotter and cold foods are kept at 41°F or colder.

- **THERMOMETERS.** A metal-stemmed thermometer, which has a temperature range of 0°F to 220°F with increments no greater than 2°F, should be on hand to monitor cooking and holding temperatures.

- **ICE.** Ice for use in beverages and as an ingredient is to be kept in a separate cooler, with no other food items. An ice scoop with a handle should be used to scoop ice to prevent bare hand contact with the ice. Ice shall be from a commercial source.

- **FOODS STORED IN ICE.** Packaged and unpackaged foods and bottled or canned beverages may not be stored in direct contact with undrained ice or water.

- **WATER.** Only water from municipality (i.e. city water) is acceptable at this time.

- **SANITIZER AND WIPING CLOTHS.** An approved sanitizer should be provided (chlorine or quaternary ammonium compounds, or iodine). Wiping cloths should be stored in the sanitizer when not in use. When using bleach to sanitize, mix one teaspoon of unscented bleach to each gallon of water.

- **EATING, DRINKING AND SMOKING.** Eating and tobacco use are not allowed in food stands. A closed drink cup with a lid and a straw is allowed, so spilling or dripping onto exposed food, clean equipment, utensils, and linens, or single-use articles will not occur.

- **CONDIMENTS.** It is best to have condiments or other consumer food toppings in individual packets, squeeze bottles or bulk dispensers with plungers.

- **WAREWASHING.** Warewashing may be done in a three-bin sink or temporary set-up using bus tubs. First, items should be washed in hot, soapy water. Second, they should be rinsed in clean, warm water. Third, they should be chemically sanitized in warm water with an approved sanitizer. Finally, the items should be air-dried.

- **ILLNESS RESTRICTIONS.** An individual who has any type of wound infection, or who has a communicable illness that could be transmitted through food shall not be allowed to work in the food stand.

- **AUTHORIZED PERSONNEL.** Only those individuals working as booth vendors, food handlers, or those who have duties directly related to the operation are allowed in the food booth.

- **HAIR RESTRAINT.** Food vendors should wear hats, scarves, visors or hairnets that are designed and worn to effectively keep hair from contacting exposed food.

- **TRASH.** Trash must be handled in a manner so that it does not create a nuisance or acts as an attractant to pests. The container should be covered when full or not in constant use. Solid waste is to be disposed of properly.

- **TOXICS.** Cleaning solutions, sanitizers or other toxic items must be stored separately from foods, single-use and service items, and food contact surfaces, and need to be properly labeled.

- **BOOTH.** The stand or booth should have means of protection to prevent a possible pest problem.

Anderson adds, “If you have questions about food safety during a temporary operation, please contact the Environmental Department at NCHD at (417) 451-3743 Ext. 3.”

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