

County of Moore
Department of Health
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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Moore County Health Department Stresses Safe Summer Grilling

While summer is a great time to fire up the grill, it's always important to keep food safety in mind when cooking and preparing meals outdoors. The Moore County Health Department encourages everyone to adhere to the following guidelines for safe grilling.

Before Cooking

- Whether you are using your own grill or a public grill at a park or campground, scrub it with hot, soapy water before each use.
- Wash your hands before, during and after food preparation. Bacteria can easily transfer from the body to foods and surfaces. This is especially important after handling raw meat and you should always wash your hands thoroughly after switching tasks.
- Thaw frozen foods in the refrigerator or microwave, never on the countertop or by the grill.
- Marinate meat in the refrigerator.
- Boil any leftover marinade before using it to season cooked meat.

While Cooking

- Never use the same brush to baste raw and cooked meat. Wash brushes in hot, soapy water between uses.
- Use separate cutting boards, plates and grilling utensils when handling raw meat and ready-to-eat foods.
- After using knives, grilling tongs or forks with raw meat and poultry, clean them thoroughly with hot soapy water.

“To Protect and Promote Health through Prevention and Control of Disease and Injury.”
<http://www.moorecountync.gov/health/>

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- Grilled foods can be harmful if not fully cooked. The only reliable way to ensure meat is safe and ready to eat is by using a meat thermometer. Checking the color of meat or juices does not always work. Use the following internal temperature guide:
 - Beef, Pork, Veal & Lamb (Steaks, Chops, Roasts): 145°F
 - Ground Meats: 160°F
 - Chicken: 165°F
 - Fish and Shellfish: 145°F

After Cooking

- Don't leave food, even if it's fully cooked, out of refrigeration for extended periods of time.
- Put all dishes in the refrigerator within two hours. In hot weather (90°F or warmer), this time is reduced to one hour.
- Place uneaten food back in a refrigerator set at or below 40°F.
- Keep perishable foods on ice. Keep a refrigerator thermometer on hand to make sure foods stay chilled properly in the cooler or refrigerator.
- Store leftovers in shallow, airtight containers (two inches deep or less). Write the date on top.
- Leftover grilled foods have a refrigerator life of three to four days. If you don't finish a leftover within this time frame, throw it away.
- Reheat leftovers to an internal temperature of 165°F before serving a second time around. Check the temperature with a meat thermometer.
- Boil leftover sauces before reusing them on cooked meat.

For more information about safe food preparation, visit the Moore County Health Department website at www.moorecountync.gov/health .

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