

# GOT RISK?

## District *Safety* Gram PEOPLE-MISSION-SAFETY



### Food Safety:

#### Cooking With Care

The summer is a great time to spend with family and friends, and nothing says it's summer like a cook out. When preparing food, it is important to maintain certain standards in order to reduce the risk of food born illness.

#### *Here are a few food safety tips to keep in mind:*

- **Cleanliness:** Cleanliness is one of the most important factors involving food safety. Cleanliness of not only one's hands, but also cooking equipment and utensils is necessary for safe food preparation. Using different plates and utensils for handling raw meat or other foodstuffs prevents cross contamination. Washing off tongs or the spatula that was used on the grill to put out raw meat, before picking up the cooked food, is something many people overlook.
  
- **Temperature control:** Generally, everyone knows that foods must be cooked to certain temperature to be sure that harmful microorganisms are not present when consuming one's meal. Use of a cooking thermometer (especially with risk foods) is a great way to make sure you have done a thorough job.
  - Do you know what the correct temperatures are? Here are just a few:
    - **Chicken and other poultry:** 165 degrees f
    - **Pork:** 160 degrees f
    - **Fish:** 140 degrees f
    - **Beef (ground):** 160 to 165 degrees f
  
- **Time Control:** Time control is another factor that influences food safety. The more time that goes by, the more time and opportunity is available for bacteria to reproduce on and in food. Foods with a high water content or those which are prepared by hand should not be left out as they have a greater chance of harboring bacteria. Unused food should always be immediately discarded of, or quickly moved to a refrigerator. Every time food is exposed to temperatures above that in your refrigerator, bacteria get more time to keep reproducing. Re-cooking/ re-heating does not always prevent food illness, as some bacteria release toxins which are not heat labile (they cannot be cooked off to break them down). It's always best to just throw something away if you suspect that it has been around for too long.

***If it doesn't look, smell, or taste safe; don't risk it!***

