

Safe Food Handling Tips: Special Events

It is important to follow safe food handling practices so that everyone attending your special event enjoys a safe meal or snack. Keep the following tips in mind when you prepare food at your special event.

Wash Your Hands

Provide a handwashing station at your booth. Thoroughly wash your hands with warm water and liquid soap and dry with a paper towel before beginning work and whenever your hands may have become contaminated.

Provide Cold Running Water

Use a camping jug with a spout if cold potable water from a tap is not available at your food preparation area.

Provide Hot Running Water

Use an electric coffee urn with a spout if hot potable water from a tap is not available at your food preparation area.

Keep Cold Foods Cold

Hazardous foods must be kept at 4°C (40°F) or colder. Store all perishable foods under refrigeration or in insulated coolers with ice or freezer packs on top of the food. Use a thermometer to check the food temperature frequently.

Keep Hot Foods Hot

Hot foods must be kept at 60°C (140°F) or hotter. Preheat hot holding units before the hot food is placed into them. Use a probe thermometer to check the food temperature frequently.

Transport Food Safely

Transport food in insulated containers. Hot foods must be kept hot, and cold foods must be kept cold. Food poisoning bacteria can multiply very quickly if food is at room temperature.

Do Not Work If You Are Sick

Do not handle food if you are sick with vomiting or diarrhea or have a cold. If you have a cut, sore, burn, or rash on your hands cover it with a clean bandage and wear disposable gloves.

Minimize Food Handling with Hands

Use utensils like tongs, spoons, and scoops whenever possible.

Change Gloves Often

If you choose to wear disposable gloves when handling food remember that your hands must be washed with soap and water before putting on gloves and whenever gloves are changed. Gloves become dirty and contaminated just like bare hands. They must be used for a single task and changed when switching to a new task or job.

Wear Clean Clothing

Wear clean clothing and aprons when handling food.

Confine Your Hair

Wear headgear such as a hat or hairnet that contains your hair when handling food.

No Smoking

Do not smoke in food preparation areas. Wash your hands after smoking and before handling food.

Clean and Sanitize All Work Areas

Wash, rinse, and sanitize all utensils, cutting boards, tables, and other items that contact food. Use 1/2 teaspoon of bleach in one litre of water in a spray bottle or bucket, or use a commercially prepared chlorine, quaternary ammonium chloride (QUAT), or iodine-based sanitizer solution.

Keep All Food Off the Ground

Store all food items on tables or shelves that are at least 15 cm (6 inches) off the ground.

Eliminate Pests

Keep food covered to deter insects and rodents. Flies carry germs. Fly strips can be hung away from food handling and storage areas. Do not use insect sprays, they can contaminate food.

Provide Garbage Bins

Keep food handling areas clean at all times. Put garbage into covered bins to discourage pests.

Cover All Foods

Keep all foods covered to prevent contamination from people, dust, dirt, insects, and other foreign objects.

Plan Ahead

Have all equipment ready and running ahead of time. Pre-chill refrigerators and pre-heat hot holding units before foods are placed into them. All food preparation must be done in an inspected kitchen. Do as much food preparation as possible ahead of time.

For More Information

Talk to a public health inspector at 1-800-265-7293 ext 4753 or visit our website at www.wdgpUBLICHEALTH.ca.