



Environmental Health
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Wichita, KS 67214
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www.wichita.gov

Guidelines for Cook-offs

Chili, Salsa, BBQ, etc.

Before holding any cook-off event in Sedgwick County, you should contact the City of Wichita Environmental Health office. This notification process allows us to assist you from the very beginning. The consultation that we provide will help to ensure that all events held are in compliance with city and state food safety laws.

It is important that you know the food safety regulations for cook-offs and other events. The Kansas Food Code and city codes relating to food service require compliance for the prevention of foodborne disease and the protection of the public's health.

Food Source: Food must be prepared on-site or in a facility approved by Environmental Health. Generally, foods prepared in a private residence are prohibited. All foods must be from an inspected source if not prepared on-site. Custom meats and home canned food items are examples of foods from unapproved sources.

Food Temperatures: Potentially Hazardous Foods (PHF) are those that require temperature control because they are capable of supporting the rapid growth of microorganisms. Examples include meats, eggs, cooked vegetables, **cut tomatoes** and dairy products. These foods must be held at 41°F or below or 135°F or above.

Hand Washing Facilities: Hand washing facilities, either temporary or permanent, must be accessible to all persons who are preparing or serving food. The minimum acceptable hand washing facility would include a five gallon-insulated cooler with a spigot which can be turned on to allow clean warm water to flow over one's hands, a catch bucket of equal or larger volume, soap, paper towels, and a waste receptacle. Hand washing should be done upon entering the food preparation or serving areas and after any activity that contaminates the employee's hands. Waste water must be disposed of in the sanitary sewer (e.g. in a toilet or a hand sink, NOT in a storm drain or on the ground).

Bare Hand Contact: Bare hand contact with ready-to-eat foods is prohibited. Ready-to-eat foods are edible without washing or additional cooking and include buns, chips, crackers, cheese and raw vegetables. Gloves, deli tissues, tongs, or other utensils must be used when handling ready-to-eat foods.

Cleaning and Sanitizing: Only single service items, such as disposable napkins and plastic cups and plates, will be allowed for consumer use. Operations that require pots, pans, or utensils that will need to be cleaned should have access to a three-compartment sink or commercial dishwasher. The minimum requirement for utensil washing is three basins, large enough to completely submerge the largest item. The first basin should contain hot, soapy water. The second should contain clean water for rinsing. The third basin should contain a sanitizer such as bleach water. A centralized washing area for multiple vendors may be allowed. All waste water must be disposed of down a sanitary sewer drain.

Sanitizer is required for sanitizing equipment and food contact surfaces. The appropriate concentration of chlorine (bleach) is 50- 200 parts per million (ppm). This is approximately one teaspoon of bleach to 1 gallon of water. Wiping cloths should be stored in sanitizer at this concentration for wiping down surfaces during operation.

Food Safety Certification: It is recommended that event organizers and participants possess Food Handlers Cards from the City of Wichita. Free classes are held at Environmental Health in English and Spanish. For dates and times visit our website at <http://www.wichita.gov/CityOffices/Environmental/FoodProt/>.

Licenses: A food service license is not required for one-time events. If your organization is serving food more often, please contact Environmental Health to discuss the possible need for a food service license. Events with expected attendance of 50 or more may require a Community Event permit. Contact Connie Clark, Community Event Coordinator, at (316) 303-8630 or csclark@wichita.gov.