



NEWS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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SAGINAW COUNTY DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC HEALTH URGES FOOD SAFETY FOR HOLIDAY ACTIVITIES

The holiday season will soon be here and with it will be many activities that involve food. The Saginaw County Department of Public Health (SCDPH) is reminding everyone to take extra care not to let foodborne bacteria ruin the fun.

To help our community stay healthy and safe, SCDPH offers the following food safety recommendations.

Steps to Follow When Cooking a Holiday Roast:

- Use separate cutting boards, plates, and utensils for raw roasts and cooked roasts to avoid cross-contamination.
- Wash items such as cutting boards that have touched raw meat with warm water and soap, or place them in a dishwasher.
- To avoid overcooking beef, veal, pork and lamb roasts use a meat thermometer. These roasts should be removed from the oven when they reach an internal temperature of 145° F and allowed to rest for three minutes before serving.
- Turkey, duck, and goose should be cooked to an internal temperature of 165° F as measured by a food thermometer. Temperatures should be taken in three areas of the bird: the thickest part of the breast, the innermost part of the wing, and the innermost part of the thigh.
- If possible, cook stuffing in its own pan. If you do stuff your turkey, goose, duck or other poultry, cook the stuffing until it reaches a temperature of 165° F as measured by a food thermometer.

Food Safety Tips for Holiday Party Buffets:

- Keep hot food hot and keep cold food cold by using chafing dishes or crock pots and ice trays. Hot items should remain above 135° F and cold items should remain below 41° F.
- Use several small plates when serving food.
- Discard perishable foods left out for 2 hours or more.

- Leftovers should be refrigerated or frozen immediately in shallow containers. Reheat leftovers to 165° F.
- If you're transporting pre-cooked food to a holiday get together, keep cold foods safe on the way there by placing items in a cooler with ice or gel packs to keep them at or below 41° F. If you're transporting hot foods, wrap dishes in insulated bags or towels and newspaper to keep their temperature above 135° F.

Top Food Safety Holiday Gifts:

- Food Thermometer: a useful tool for even the most experienced cook as it is the only way to ensure that meat is fully cooked.
- Cutting Board: using separate cutting boards for raw meat and ready-to-eat food is a great way to prevent cross-contamination.
- Kitchen Towel: these towels should be washed frequently to avoid cross-contamination, so a home cook can never have enough kitchen towels.

Steps to Follow for Mail Delivered Holiday Food:

- Check with the mail delivery company to ensure they send perishable items, like meat and poultry, cold or frozen and pack it with a cold source.
- Foods should be packaged in a foam or heavy corrugated cardboard container.
- Delivery should occur as quickly as possible – ideally, overnight.
- Foods should arrive frozen or partially frozen with ice crystals still visible or at least refrigerator cold – below 41° F as measured by a food thermometer.

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