

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE (06-29-2010)

## **Picnic Safety**

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HUNTINGTON, West Virginia. Summertime means picnics. However, picnicing often leads to an increased incidence of food poisoning. The Cabell-Huntington Health Department asks you to take a minute and review the proper ways to handle your food so you can keep your friends and loved ones healthy!

Wash Hands Frequently:

- Wash hands thoroughly with soap and water before and after handling raw meat.
- If running water is not available, make your own hand-washing station using a container with a spigot, filled with warm water.
- Hand sanitizer may be used as a last resort.
- Everyone should wash their hands prior to eating.

Cook meat thoroughly :

- Ground beef patties should be cooked to 155 degrees Fahrenheit; the burger should be brown in the middle.
- Chicken should be cooked to 165 degrees Fahrenheit and should not be pink inside.

Maintain appropriate food temperatures:

- Cold foods must be kept cold (below 41 degrees Fahrenheit).
- Hot food should be kept hot (above 140 degrees Fahrenheit).
- Immediately store leftover food in an ice chest. Throwaway any leftover food that has sat out for more than two hours.

Prepare salads properly:

- Chill salad ingredients before combining.
- Transport potato, macaroni and other salads containing milk, meat or eggs on ice, then nest the salad bowl in a larger bowl of ice.

Wash fruits and vegetables thoroughly:

- Wash fruits and vegetables using running water and a vegetable brush before cooking or serving.

- Cut fruit and vegetables should be kept cold. This can be done by placing the serving dish on ice.

Clean-up:

- Clean utensils and cutting boards to avoid contamination of other foods with raw meat.
- Use different utensils for serving than what was used for preparing the food.
- Wash utensils and surfaces with hot, soapy water.

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