



## **Have fun and stay safe this Fourth of July**

“Independence Day celebrations are a perfect time to gather with family and friends,” said Cook County Department of Public Health Chief Operating Officer Terry Mason, MD. “Remember to prevent foodborne illness and injuries while enjoying Fourth of July picnics and parties.”

Follow these basic safety tips to help make fun holiday memories this weekend:

### **Food Safety – Clean, Separate, Cook, Chill:**

- **Clean:** Always wash hands thoroughly before preparing food and after handling raw meats. Scrub fruits and vegetables.
- **Separate:** Avoid cross-contaminating foods by keeping each item separate. Wrap foods well.
- **Cook** ground meats to an internal temperature of 160°F, and all poultry and hot dogs to 165°F.
- **Chill:** Keep food chilled in a cooler with plenty of ice and maintain a temperature of 40 degrees F.

Keep hot food at 140°F or above and cold food at 40°F or below. Refrigerate leftovers within two hours.

### **Fireworks Safety:**

- The safest way to enjoy fireworks is to attend a professionally-operated community firework display.
- Warn children about the dangers of playing with fireworks – even sparklers which burn at 2,000°F.

### **Water Safety:**

- Always provide adult supervision while children are in or around water. Maintain gates and fences around residential pools.
- Make sure kids wear life jackets and always keep floatation devices on hand.
- Remember that lifeguards are on duty to respond to emergencies, not to supervise children.

### **West Nile Virus:**

Practice the 3 R's to prevent mosquitoes from breeding and biting:

- **Remove** – Eliminate opportunities for mosquitoes to breed outside your home. Once a week, dump water that is collecting outside in buckets, flowerpots, toys, kiddie pools, pet bowls, spare tires, etc. Keep gutters clean and free of debris.
- **Repel** – Use Environmental Protection Agency (EPA)-registered insect repellents when outdoors. Always follow the directions on the label. Wear long-sleeved shirts and long pants. Use air conditioning when possible.
- **Repair** – Keep mosquitoes outside. Make sure your doors and windows have tight-fitting screens. Repair any tears or other openings.

For more information, visit [www.fightthebitecookcounty.com](http://www.fightthebitecookcounty.com) and [www.cookcountypublichealth.org](http://www.cookcountypublichealth.org). Follow us on Twitter (CookCoHealth) and like us on Facebook (CCDPH).

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