

**DATE:** June 26, 2018  
**TO:** DeKalb County News Media  
**FROM:** DeKalb County Health Department

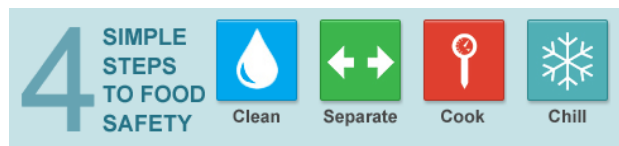
**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
***Food Safety During Fourth of July Festivities***

DeKalb County Health Department's (DCHD) Director of Health Protection, Greg Maurice, encourages all residents to take a few precautions to help protect family and friends while enjoying Fourth of July food favorites by following four simple steps – clean, separate, cook and chill.

1. **CLEAN:** Always wash hands and surfaces often before preparing food and after handling raw meats. Scrub fruits and vegetables.
2. **SEPARATE:** Avoid cross-contaminating foods by keeping each item separate and wrap foods well.
3. **COOK:** Cook to the right temperature. Bacteria that causes food poisoning multiplies quickest in the “Danger Zone” between 40 degrees and 140 degrees Fahrenheit.
4. **CHILL:** Refrigerate leftovers within two hours if indoors, or one hour if outdoors in weather 90 degrees Fahrenheit or higher. Illness causing bacteria can grow in perishable foods within two hours unless refrigerated or chilled.

Other safety tips include:

- Scrub cutting boards with hot soapy water after preparing food.
- Use a metal stemmed food thermometer to ensure food is cooked to the proper temperature. Food is safely cooked when it reaches a high enough internal temperature to kill harmful bacteria (see below).
- Refrigerate leftovers within 2 hours of serving time.



Food-borne illness is preventable. Learn the risks of food poisoning in the web series ‘Recipes for Disaster’ at <http://www.foodsafety.gov/keep/basics/index.html>. To learn more about the many programs and services of the Health Department, visit <http://health.dekalbcounty.org/> or follow us on social media.



###