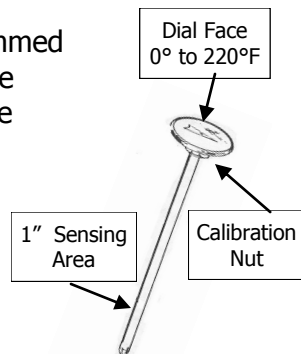




RECOMMENDED GUIDELINES FOR THOSE PREPARING AND SERVING FOOD

- **DO** wash hands thoroughly with soap and warm water for a minimum of 20 seconds before beginning food preparation.
- **DO** clean all kitchen surfaces before you begin cooking.
- **DO** scrub cutting boards with hot soapy water after each food has been cut or sliced to prevent cross-contamination.
- **DO** thoroughly wash all fruits and vegetables. After preparation keep under refrigeration.
- **DO** prepare foods as close to the serving time as possible. If prepared in advance, food must be cooled immediately after cooking.
- **DO** use a metal stemmed thermometer to make sure the center of the food reaches the proper internal temperature. (Refer to inside for temperature guide.)



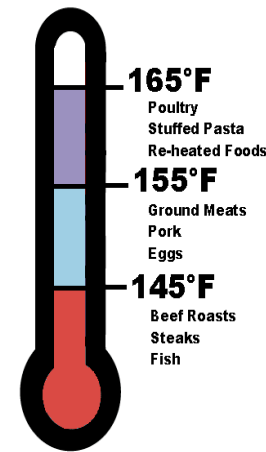
- **DO** limit the quantities of food prepared to what facilities can handle (i.e. refrigerators, ovens).
- **DO** keep in mind that large quantities of food can take an extended period of time to cool even under refrigeration. Putting food in shallow (less than 4" deep) containers, accelerates the cooling process.
- **DO** transport hot foods in an insulated container. Transport cold foods in an insulated cooler with ice packs to keep food under 41°F.
- **DO** designate a person to be in charge to oversee appropriate food handling practices.
- **DO** make sure each dish has its own serving utensil.
- **DO** keep hot foods hot (135°F or above), and cold foods cold (41°F or below).
- **DO** reheat food rapidly to an internal temperature of 165°F before serving.
- **DO** refrigerate leftovers quickly.
- **DO** call the Health Department if you have questions at 815-334-4585.

USING YOUR THERMOMETER...

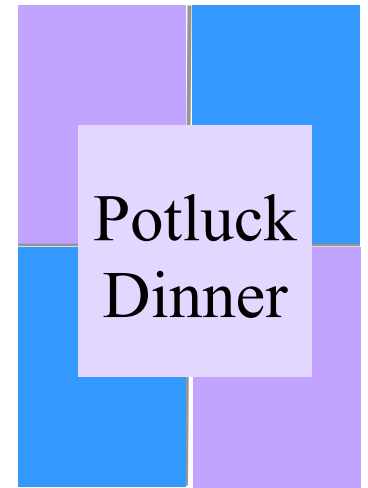
A metal stemmed thermometer can be used for all foods (not just meat) to measure the internal temperature of your cooked foods. This assures that a safe temperature has been reached to destroy harmful bacteria.

WHERE TO PLACE THE THERMOMETER

Insert the thermometer into the center of the thickest part (away from bone) of the meat. When cooking casseroles and egg dishes, place the thermometer into the thickest portion, making sure the thermometer does not touch the bottom of the pan.



McHenry County Department Of Health
 Division Of Environmental Health
 2200 N. Seminary Avenue
 Woodstock, Illinois 60098
 (815) 334-4585
 Fax (815) 334-4637
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McHenry County
 Department of Health

 Division of
 Environmental Health

This brochure serves as a guide to individuals or groups holding a potluck event to help ensure that the food is handled safely.

Food containing bacteria or viruses that can cause foodborne illness does not smell or taste differently. So it is imperative that people preparing and serving food for a potluck dinner follow safety precautions.

If you have any questions, please contact the McHenry County Department of Health at 815-334-4585.

What is a potluck dinner?

Effective 6/1/2005, Public Act 093-1039 defines a potluck as an event which meets all of the following conditions:

- People are gathered to share food at the event.
- There is no compensation provided to people for bringing food to the event.

- There is no charge for food or beverage provided at the event and no food shall be sold at a potluck event.
- The event is not conducted for commercial purposes.
- It is generally understood by participants at the event that neither the food nor the facilities have been inspected by the State or local certified public health department.



- No fee may be charged for admission to the potluck event.
- The potluck event shall not be sponsored by a business establishment dealing in the sale of food items.
- Potluck event food may not be brought into the kitchen of a business establishment dealing in the sale of food items.
- The event is not held on public property.

Questions and Answers Regarding your Potluck Event

Does the McHenry County Department of Health require health permits or inspect potluck events?

NO - The Health Department does not issue health permits or inspect potluck events.

Can a potluck event be open to the public?

YES - Provided that there is no charge to participate in the event.

Can I advertise for a potluck event?

YES - Provided the potluck event is not used for commercial purposes.

Can I charge an admittance fee to attend the potluck?

NO - You may not charge an admittance fee or for food or beverage served at the potluck.

Who do I call if I have questions regarding my potluck?

Call the Health Department for additional information on potluck events or food safety issues at 815-334-4585.



TIPS for your Potluck Dinner

DON'T thaw meat on the counter. Defrost foods in the refrigerator.

DON'T use recipes in which eggs remain raw or are only partially cooked.

DON'T refrigerate partially cooked meats to finish cooking them later.

DON'T taste foods using utensils that are put back into the food.

DON'T assume your food is thoroughly cooked. Check the internal temperature frequently.

DON'T store raw foods above ready to eat foods.

DON'T allow pets in your food preparation area. If you touch your pet, be sure to wash your hands before you handle food.

DON'T smoke, drink or eat while preparing or serving food.

DON'T take a chance that the food is safe. If food has been left out for more than 2 hours – THROW IT OUT!