



Safety and Environmental Newsletter

June 2023 — 134th Edition

FOOD FACTS



Eating Outdoors: Handling Food Safely



Keep your food safe: from the refrigerator/freezer — all the way to the picnic table!

Picnic and barbecue season offers lots of opportunities for outdoor fun with family and friends. But these warm weather events also present opportunities for foodborne bacteria to thrive. As food heats up in summer temperatures, bacteria multiply rapidly.

To protect yourself, your family, and friends from foodborne illness during warm-weather months, safe food handling when eating outdoors is critical. Read on for simple food safety guidelines for transporting your food to the picnic site, and preparing and serving it safely once you've arrived.

Pack and Transport Food Safely

Keep your food safe: from the refrigerator/freezer — all the way to the picnic table.

- **Keep cold food cold.** Place cold food in a cooler with ice or frozen gel packs. Cold food should be stored at 40 °F or below to prevent bacterial growth. Meat, poultry, and seafood may be packed while still frozen so that they stay colder longer.
- **Organize cooler contents.** Consider packing beverages in one cooler and perishable foods in another. That way, as picnickers open and reopen the beverage cooler to replenish their drinks, the perishable foods won't be exposed to warm outdoor air temperatures.
- **Keep coolers closed:** Once at the picnic site, limit the number of times the cooler is opened as much as you can. This helps to keep the contents cold longer.
- **Don't cross-contaminate.** Be sure to keep raw meat, poultry, and seafood securely wrapped. This keeps their juices from contaminating prepared/cooked foods or foods that will be eaten raw, such as fruits and vegetables.
- **Clean your produce.** Rinse fresh fruits and vegetables under running tap water before packing them in the cooler — including those with skins and rinds that are not eaten. Rub firm-skinned fruits and vegetables under running tap water or scrub with a clean vegetable brush while rinsing with running tap water. Dry fruits and vegetables with a clean cloth towel or paper towel. Packaged fruits and vegetables that are labeled "ready-to-eat," "washed," or "triple washed" need not be washed.

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Quick Tips for Picnic Site Preparation

Food safety begins with proper hand cleaning — including in outdoor settings. Before you begin setting out your picnic feast, make sure hands and surfaces are clean.

- **Outdoor Hand Cleaning:** If you don't have access to running water, use a water jug, some soap, and paper towels. Or, consider using moist disposable towelettes for cleaning your hands.
- **Utensils and Serving Dishes:** Take care to keep all utensils and platters clean when preparing food.

Follow Safe Grilling Tips

Grilling and picnicking often go hand-in-hand. And just as with cooking indoors, there are important guidelines that should be followed to ensure that your grilled food reaches the table safely.

- **Marinate safely.** Marinate foods in the refrigerator — never on the kitchen counter or outdoors. In addition, if you plan to use some of the marinade as a sauce on the cooked food, reserve a portion separately before adding the raw meat, poultry, or seafood. Don't reuse marinade.
- **Cook immediately after "partial cooking."** Partial cooking before grilling is only safe when the partially cooked food can go on the hot grill immediately, for example at a home with a grill on the patio or deck.
- **Cook food thoroughly.** When it's time to cook the food, have your food thermometer ready. Always use it to be sure your food is cooked thoroughly. (See Safe Food Temperature Chart)
- **Keep "ready" food hot.** Grilled food can be kept hot until served by moving it to the side of the grill rack, just away from the coals. This keeps it hot but prevents overcooking.
- **Don't reuse platters or utensils.** Using the same platter or utensils that previously held raw meat, poultry, or seafood allows bacteria from the raw food's juices to spread to the cooked food. Instead, have a clean platter and utensils ready at grill-side to serve your food.
- **Check for foreign objects in food.** If you clean your grill using a bristle brush, check to make sure that no detached bristles have made their way into grilled food.

SAFE COOKING TEMPERATURES as measured with a food thermometer	
GROUND MEAT & MEAT MIXTURES	Internal temperature
Beef, Pork, Veal, Lamb	160 °F
Turkey, Chicken	165 °F
FRESH BEEF, PORK, VEAL & LAMB	145 °F with a 3 minute rest time
POULTRY	
Chicken & Turkey, Whole	165 °F
Poultry Parts	165 °F
Duck & Goose	165 °F
Stuffing (cooked alone or in bird)	165 °F
HAM	
Fresh (raw)	160 °F
Pre-cooked (to reheat)	140 °F
EGGS & EGG DISHES	
Eggs	Cook until yolk & white are firm
Egg Dishes	160 °F
SEAFOOD	
Fin Fish	145 °F or flesh is opaque and separates easily with fork
Shrimp, Lobster & Crabs	Flesh pearly & opaque
Clams, Oysters & Mussels	Shells open during cooking
Scallops	Milky white or opaque & firm
LEFTOVERS & CASSEROLES	165 °F

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Prevent "Cross-Contamination" When Serving

Never reuse a plate or utensils that previously held raw meat, poultry, or seafood for serving — unless they've been washed first in hot, soapy water. Otherwise, you can spread bacteria from the raw juices to your cooked or ready-to-eat food. This is particularly important to remember when serving cooked foods from the grill.

Serving Picnic Food

Keep Cold Foods Cold and Hot Foods Hot

Keeping food at proper temperatures — indoor and out — is critical in preventing the growth of foodborne bacteria. The key is to never let your picnic food remain in the "Danger Zone" — between 40 °F and 140 °F — for more than 2 hours, or 1 hour if outdoor temperatures are above 90 °F. This is when bacteria in food can multiply rapidly, and lead to foodborne illness.

Instead, follow these simple rules for keeping cold foods cold and hot foods hot.



Cold Food



Cold perishable food should be kept in the cooler at 40 °F or below until serving time.

- Once you've served it, it should not sit out for longer than 2 hours, or 1 hour if the outdoor temperature is above 90 °F. If it does — discard it.
- Foods like chicken salad and desserts in individual serving dishes can be placed directly on ice, or in a shallow container set in a deep pan filled with ice. Drain off water as ice melts and replace ice frequently.

Hot Food



Hot food should be kept hot, at or above 140 °F.

- Wrap it well and place it in an insulated container until serving.
- Just as with cold food — these foods should not sit out for more than 2 hours, or 1 hour in temperatures above 90 °F. If food is left out longer, throw it away to be safe.

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Safe Food Handling: Four Simple Steps



CLEAN

Wash hands and surfaces often

- Wash your hands with warm water and soap for at least 20 seconds before and after handling food and after using the bathroom, changing diapers, and handling pets.
- Wash your cutting boards, dishes, utensils, and counter tops with hot soapy water after preparing each food item.
- Consider using paper towels to clean up kitchen surfaces. If you use cloth towels, launder them often in the hot cycle.
- Rinse fresh fruits and vegetables under running tap water, including those with skins and rinds that are not eaten. Scrub firm produce with a clean produce brush.
- With canned goods, remember to clean lids before opening.

SEPARATE

Separate raw meats from other foods

- Separate raw meat, poultry, seafood, and eggs from other foods in your grocery shopping cart, grocery bags, and refrigerator.
- Use one cutting board for fresh produce and a separate one for raw meat, poultry, and seafood.
- Never place cooked food on a plate that previously held raw meat, poultry, seafood, or eggs unless the plate has been washed in hot, soapy water.
- Don't reuse marinades used on raw foods unless you bring them to a boil first.

COOK

Cook to the right temperature

- Color and texture are unreliable indicators of safety. Using a food thermometer is the only way to ensure the safety of meat, poultry, seafood, and egg products for all cooking methods. These foods must be cooked to a safe minimum internal temperature to destroy any harmful bacteria.
- Cook eggs until the yolk and white are firm. Only use recipes in which eggs are cooked or heated thoroughly.
- When cooking in a microwave oven, cover food, stir, and rotate for even cooking. If there is no turntable, rotate the dish by hand once or twice during cooking. Always allow standing time, which completes the cooking, before checking the internal temperature with a food thermometer.
- Bring sauces, soups and gravy to a boil when reheating.

CHILL

Refrigerate foods promptly

- Use an appliance thermometer to be sure the temperature is consistently 40 °F or below and the freezer temperature is 0 °F or below.
- Refrigerate or freeze meat, poultry, eggs, seafood, and other perishables within 2 hours of cooking or purchasing. Refrigerate within 1 hour if the temperature outside is above 90 °F.
- Never thaw food at room temperature, such as on the counter top. There are three safe ways to defrost food: in the refrigerator, in cold water, and in the microwave. Food thawed in cold water or in the microwave should be cooked immediately.
- Always marinate food in the refrigerator.
- Divide large amounts of leftovers into shallow containers for quicker cooling in the refrigerator.

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For more information, contact the U.S. Food and Drug Administration, Center for Food Safety and Applied Nutrition's Food and Cosmetics Information Center at 1-888-SAFEFOOD (toll free), Monday through Friday 10 AM to 4 PM ET (except Thursdays from 12:30 PM to 1:30 PM ET and Federal holidays). Or, visit the FDA website at <http://www.fda.gov/educationresource/ulbray>



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FIREWORKS

Each year, fireworks injure thousands and cause thousands of fires.



Fireworks cause an estimated **18,500** reported fires in the U.S. each year.

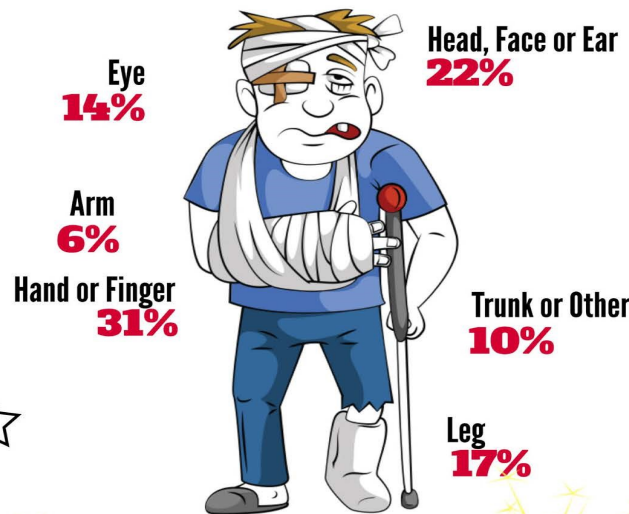
LEAVE FIREWORKS TO THE EXPERTS!

Summer is filled with barbecues, parades and fireworks. The National Safety Council advises everyone to enjoy fireworks at public displays conducted by professionals, and not to use fireworks at home.

U.S. hospital emergency rooms saw an estimated 12,900 people for fireworks-related injuries in 2017.

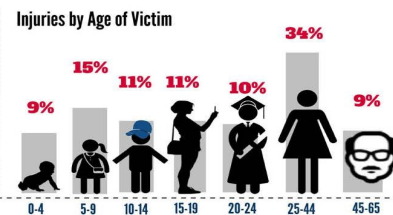


Fireworks Injuries by Body Part



Sparklers alone account for more than one-quarter of emergency room fireworks injuries.

Fireworks Injuries: Demographics



MALES ACCOUNT FOR **70%** OF FIREWORKS-RELATED INJURIES

However, children aged 5-9 are actually **more than twice** as likely as other age groups to be injured by fireworks when looking at relative risk based on population totals of each age group.

About 2 in 5 fires started by fireworks each year, are reported on Independence Day.



Be safe. If you want to see fireworks, go to a public show put on by experts.

For more information, please visit: www.nfpa.org/fireworks



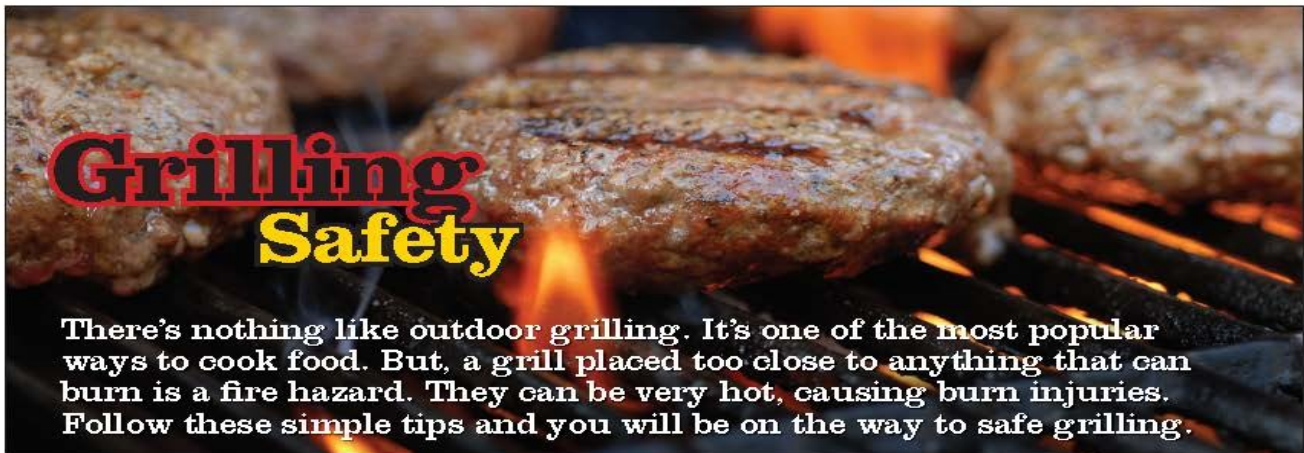
NATIONAL FIRE PROTECTION ASSOCIATION
The leading information and knowledge resource on fire, electrical and related hazards

*Information sourced from CPSC, and NFPA's "Fireworks Report"



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Grilling Safety

There's nothing like outdoor grilling. It's one of the most popular ways to cook food. But, a grill placed too close to anything that can burn is a fire hazard. They can be very hot, causing burn injuries. Follow these simple tips and you will be on the way to safe grilling.

SAFETY TIPS

- ❗ Propane and charcoal BBQ grills should only be used outdoors.
- ❗ The grill should be placed well away from the home, deck railings and out from under eaves and overhanging branches.
- ❗ Keep children and pets at least three feet away from the grill area.
- ❗ Keep your grill clean by removing grease or fat buildup from the grills and in trays below the grill.
- ❗ Never leave your grill unattended.
- ❗ Always make sure your gas grill lid is open before lighting it.

CHARCOAL GRILLS

- ❗ There are several ways to get the charcoal ready to use. Charcoal chimney starters allow you to start the charcoal using newspaper as a fuel.
- ❗ If you use a starter fluid, use only charcoal starter fluid. Never add charcoal fluid or any other flammable liquids to the fire.
- ❗ Keep charcoal fluid out of the reach of children and away from heat sources.
- ❗ There are also electric charcoal starters, which do not use fire. Be sure to use an extension cord for outdoor use.
- ❗ When you are finished grilling, let the coals completely cool before disposing in a metal container.

PROPANE Grills

Check the gas tank hose for leaks before using it for the first time each year. Apply a light soap and water solution to the hose. A propane leak will release bubbles. If your grill has a gas leak, by smell or the soapy bubble test, and there is no flame, turn off both the gas tank and the grill. If the leak stops, get the grill serviced by a professional before using it again. If the leak does not stop, call the fire department. **If you smell gas while cooking, immediately get away from the grill and call the fire department.** Do not move the grill.

If the flame goes out, turn the grill and gas off and wait at least **5 minutes** before re-lighting it.

FACTS

- ❗ July is the peak month for grill fires.
- ❗ Roughly half of the injuries involving grills are thermal burns.



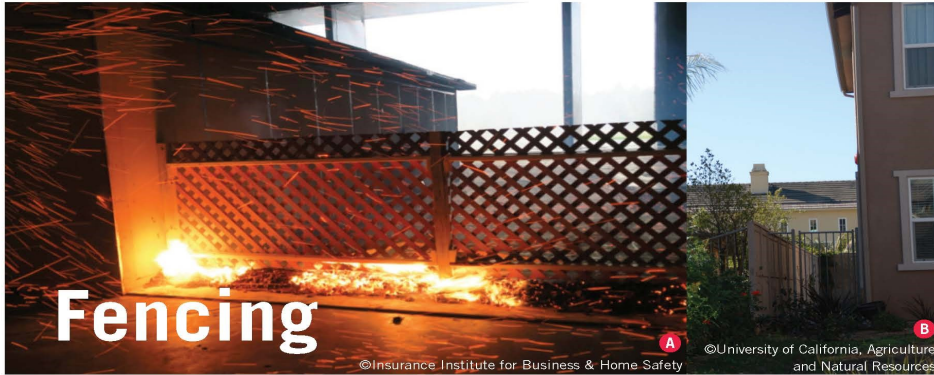
NATIONAL FIRE PROTECTION ASSOCIATION
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Your Logo



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Fencing

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WILDFIRE RESEARCH FACT SHEET



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Material, Installation and Maintenance Choices

NONCOMBUSTIBLE FENCING PRODUCTS REDUCE POTENTIAL HOME IGNITIONS

Many wildfire educational programs, along with the Insurance Institute for Business & Home Safety (IBHS) recommend noncombustible fencing products when placed within five feet of a building. As a necessary component, fencing located within the zero to five-foot noncombustible zone should be constructed of noncombustible materials.

A noncombustible zone minimizes the likelihood of wind-blown embers igniting fine fuels (such as bark mulch) located close to the building. Ember-ignited mulch can result in a radiant heat and/or flaming exposure to the building's exterior. Using noncombustible fencing where it attaches to the building reduces the opportunity of a burning fence igniting the exterior of the structure. Fencing products are often available in eight-foot pieces and use of that full section of noncombustible material is recommended. Observations made during the 2012 Waldo Canyon fire in Colorado Springs, CO provided evidence that burning fencing generates embers that can result in additional ignitions down-wind.

PERIMETER FENCING

When neighboring buildings are located within 20 feet of each other, use of steel fencing for the perimeter area can serve as a radiant barrier, providing added protection should a neighboring building ignite and burn. Research in Australia demonstrated the ability of panelized steel fencing to resist a radiant heat exposure.

RESEARCH FINDINGS TO HELP AVOID FENCE IGNITIONS

Recent research conducted by IBHS and the National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST), both independently and in a collaborative project, provided additional information about the vulnerability of combustible fencing.

Photo Captions:

- A** Flame spread to the building when combustible debris was at the base of the fence.
- B** Gates made from noncombustible materials should be used where a fence is attached to the home. Source: University of California, Agriculture and Natural Resources
- C** Ignition from ember accumulation at the intersection of the vertical planks and horizontal support member.

RESEARCH FINDINGS:

- 1** Use a noncombustible fence section when it's attached to a building.
- 2** The area at the base of the fence should be kept clear of debris. Flame spread to the building will be more likely if fine vegetative fuels (e.g., pine needles, leaf litter and small twigs) have accumulated. Avoid placement of combustible mulch near the fence.
- 3** A fence design that allows for greater air flow, such as a single panel lattice fence, makes it more difficult for wind-blown embers to accumulate at plank, or lattice panel to horizontal support locations. If an ignition occurs, it's also more difficult for lateral flame spread to occur in the fencing material. Fence ignitions from wind-blown embers are more likely to occur at locations where vertical fencing planks attach to horizontal support members. The most vulnerable fencing from this perspective is a "privacy" fence, where the fence planks are on the same side as the horizontal support members.
- 4** A fence built from lattice that's applied to both sides of the support posts may be desired for privacy or other landscaping purposes, but should be avoided in wildfire-prone areas. Recent research at NIST has demonstrated that fire growth and lateral flame spread are much greater in this design style.
- 5** Vinyl fencing is not vulnerable to ember exposures alone, but did burn when subjected to flaming exposures from burning debris. Vinyl fencing will deform if subjected to radiant heat.



FIREWISE USA™
RESIDENTS REDUCING WILDFIRE RISKS



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Ways to Save Water This Summer

1. Water in the Early Morning or Evening

When the sun is high, water quickly evaporates. Put water to better use by watering at times when moisture is more likely to stay in the soil.

2. Cover a Pool

Leaving your pool open leads to water evaporation, which may result in filling up a pool more often.

3. Layer Mulch

Apply a thick layer of bark mulch to trees, shrubs, and gardens to help retain moisture and limit the need to water plants as frequently.

4. Control Sprinklers

Make sure your sprinkler isn't spraying your house, driveway, or walkway and is truly watering your lawn. When cleaning driveway and walkways, conserve water by using a push broom instead of the hose.

5. Get a Rain Barrel

Purchase a rain barrel to collect water from a gutter's downspout. Reuse the water for lawn and garden.

6. Hold Off on At-Home Car Washes

Almost twice as much water can be saved by washing a vehicle at the car wash.

7. Rinse Fresh Produce in a Bowl

Rinse produce in a bowl of water instead of running water. Then repurpose the water for watering indoor plants and garden.

8. Avoid Washing Every Dish by Hand

Using a dishwasher could save up to 20 gallons of water.

9. Thaw Frozen Foods

Thaw frozen foods on the counter or in the fridge to avoid using running water.

10. Start Composting

Begin composting instead of relying on a garbage disposal. This saves water and turns discarded fruit and veggies into useful gardening soil.

11. Cut Shower Time

Shortening showers by just 2 minutes to save 150 gallons a month .

12. Avoid Receiving Water You Won't Drink

When eating out, let the waiter know if you are unlikely to drink the complimentary glass of water so it won't end up down the drain after you leave.

