



## Press Release

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Contact: [ccdphmedia@cookcountyhhs.org](mailto:ccdphmedia@cookcountyhhs.org)

### Fourth of July is here – have fun, but stay safe.

“Fourth of July is a perfect time to gather with family and friends,” said Cook County Department of Public Health Chief Operating Officer Terry Mason, MD, FACS. “When you are enjoying picnics, block parties and other Fourth of July celebrations, remember to prevent foodborne illness and personal injuries. Follow our basic safety tips to help make these holiday memories fun and healthy.”

#### **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.
- Keep food chilled. Stock 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:**

The CDC reports drowning as the leading cause of death for children 1 to 14 years.

- 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:**

Mosquito pools in suburban Cook County have tested positive for West Nile virus this season.

- **REDUCE** exposure when mosquitoes are most active, especially between dusk and dawn.
  - Fix or replace torn or missing screens on doors and windows.
  - Remove standing water in pet bowls, flowerpots, tires, birdbaths, baby pools and toys where mosquitoes can breed. Make sure rain gutters drain properly.
- **REPEL** mosquitoes when outdoors: Apply insect repellent with DEET. Follow label directions.
- **REPORT** dead birds to CCDPH online at: <http://goo.gl/UTV4C3>

For more information, visit: [www.cookcountypublichealth.org](http://www.cookcountypublichealth.org), like us Facebook/ccdph and follow us on Twitter@cookcohealth.

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