



# Middleton Health Department Newsletter

March 2015

## Our Mission

To improve public health by promoting an individual's well-being, preventing disease, and protecting an individual's health within the community.

## FOODBORNE DISEASES

The Center for Disease Control (CDC) estimates that **foodborne diseases** cause approximately 76 million illnesses, 325,000 hospitalizations, and 5000 deaths in the **United States each year**. These numbers are staggering. Children, the elderly and those with chronic illnesses are at the highest risk of complications. Don't let yourself, your family or your loved ones suffer.

## FOOD SAFETY AT HOME

How do you prevent yourself, your family and your loved ones from suffering from foodborne diseases? The answer is: Clean, Separate, Cook & Chill.

1. Handwashing. Preventing the spread of germs always begins with proper handwashing. Wash your hands well before handling and preparing food.
2. Keep the area where you prepare foods **clean**. Wash cutting boards, dishes, cooking utensils and counter tops with warm soapy water before and after preparing foods. Periodically sanitize cutting boards and counter tops with a solution of 1 tsp. of bleach to 1 qt. of water and rinse well.
3. Wash all fruits and vegetables before eating to remove dirt, contaminants, pesticides, insects and germs.
3. Avoid cross contamination of foods. Prepare foods that are more likely to have illness-causing germs (ex. eggs, meat, poultry, fish, shellfish, crustaceans) **separately** from foods that are ready to eat. Always wash your hands after handling foods that are more likely to have illness-causing germs.
4. Avoid the temperature **Danger Zone**. Germs grow rapidly between the temperature danger zone of 41-140°F and especially at room temperature.

**\*Cook** your foods to the proper temperature. Cook poultry to an internal temperature of 170°F, ground meat and pork to 160°F, steaks, roasts and fish to 145°F. Poultry should not have any pink in it. Meat juices should not be red or pink, they should run clear.

**\*Chill** your foods to the proper temperature. Store raw meat, poultry and eggs in the refrigerator. Place all leftovers in the refrigerator promptly. Thaw meat in the refrigerator. Do not let meat thaw on the counter or outside. Plan ahead to allow proper thawing method. If food has been out for more than four hours, throw it away.

### Middleton Board of Health

Robert Ambrefe, Chairman  
George Demeritt  
John Goodwin  
Mathew Greenfield  
Paul LeBlanc

### Middleton Health Department

195 N Main Street  
Middleton MA 01949  
978-777-1869

[www.townofmiddleton.org](http://www.townofmiddleton.org)



Derek Fullerton, RS, CHO  
Director of Public Health

[healthdirector@townofmiddleton.org](mailto:healthdirector@townofmiddleton.org)



Traci Mello, RN, BSN  
Public Health Nurse

[phn@townofmiddleton.org](mailto:phn@townofmiddleton.org)



Patricia Zingarelli  
Department Clerk

[dpwsecretary@townofmiddleton.org](mailto:dpwsecretary@townofmiddleton.org)

### Middleton Health Department

195 N Main Street  
Middleton MA 01949  
978-777-1869

[www.townofmiddleton.org](http://www.townofmiddleton.org)



*Did you know?*

It takes millions of salmonella cells to make you sick (eggs, poultry), but only one E. Coli cell to make you sick?

**Food-borne illnesses cost the United States \$15.6 billion a year:** [http://www.foodsafetynews.com/2014/10/foodborne-illnesses-cost-usa-15-6-billion-annually/#.VPXJd\\_nF-Y8](http://www.foodsafetynews.com/2014/10/foodborne-illnesses-cost-usa-15-6-billion-annually/#.VPXJd_nF-Y8)

## Have you heard of “FIFO”?

**FIFO** stands for **First In, First Out**. Always label your food for storage/refrigeration with the date stored and the date it must be used by. Store food that expires first in front of items that will expire later. Use the food in front as it will expire first. Check expiration dates daily in the refrigerator and on packaged foods. It is that easy!

## It's Never too Late to Talk about Cookouts!



**Be sure to include safe food handling in your cookout plans!**

**CLEAN** - Wash hands and surfaces often.  
**SEPARATE** - Don't cross-contaminate!  
**COOK** - Cook to proper temperature.  
**CHILL** - Refrigerate promptly!

## What about School and Lunch Boxes?



**Food is stored in lunch boxes for several hours, so the lunch box needs to stay cool. Suggestions include:**

- Choose an insulated lunch box or one with a freezer pack, or include a wrapped frozen water bottle to keep the lunch box cool.
- Follow hygienic food preparation methods. This is especially important when food will be stored in the lunch box for many hours before eating.
- Prepare lunches the night before and store in the fridge or freezer.
- Perishable foods such as dairy products, eggs and sliced meats should be kept cool and eaten within about four hours of preparation. Don't pack these foods if just cooked. First cool in the refrigerator overnight.