



MICHELLE LUJAN GRISHAM, GOVERNOR
James C. Kenney, Cabinet Secretary

NEWS RELEASE

For Immediate Release
May 26, 2023

The Environment Department's mission is to protect and restore the environment and to foster a healthy and prosperous New Mexico for present and future generations.

Contact: Matthew Maez, Communications Director
New Mexico Environment Department
505.670.8911 | matthew.maez@env.nm.gov

Environment Department shares food safety tips for Memorial Day weekend

Stay safe and healthy this weekend by preventing foodborne illness

SANTA FE — Sharing food with friends and family is a highlight for many New Mexicans over Memorial Day weekend. To keep you and your loved ones safe and healthy, the New Mexico Environment Department (NMED) reminds you to follow these simple food safety tips:

- Make sure that the location of the gathering has enough oven, stovetop, refrigerator, freezer, and workspace needed to keep foods at a safe temperature
• Ensure that there is a source of clean water for food preparation and cleaning
• Separate raw meats from other foods
• Keep hot foods at an internal temperature of 140°F or warmer
• Keep cold foods at 40°F or colder
• Discard any perishables left out at room temperature for more than two hours
• Wash hands, surfaces, and serving utensils often
• Divide large amounts of leftovers into shallow containers for quicker cooling in the refrigerator



Graphic courtesy of the USDA

Foods that are not properly prepared or stored can make you sick. Most foodborne illnesses are caused by germs like bacteria, viruses or parasites. The most common symptoms of foodborne illness are diarrhea and/or vomiting. Other symptoms might include cramping, nausea, fever, headache, tiredness and sometimes blood or pus in the stool.

While many people with foodborne illness believe they got it from the last meal they ate, this is not always the case. Symptoms of foodborne illness can begin as early as 30 minutes after consuming contaminated food, beverages or water, but usually start one or more days after the exposure. Foodborne illnesses generally last a few days but can be more severe in people who have medical problems or weakened immune systems.

One way to stay safe over the holiday is to eat at local restaurants in New Mexico. Restaurants and commercial kitchens are required by law to follow safe food handling and preparation procedures, and they are inspected regularly to ensure compliance with regulations.

NMED's Food Safety Program protects public health by permitting, inspecting and providing technical assistance to food establishments in New Mexico to prevent foodborne illness. The program also permits events where food will be served, like county and state fairs. As of the most recent [NMED Quarterly Performance Report](#), only 4.5% of restaurants and food manufacturers were found to have some type of violation during an annual inspection. NMED does not have jurisdiction in Bernalillo County and Albuquerque, as they have their own food safety programs.

If you believe you may have a foodborne illness, contact your healthcare provider and the New Mexico Department of Health at 505-827-0006. Report a possible concern or violation of a license, permit, or rule to NMED [online](#) or at 866-428-6535.

###

NMED does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, disability, age or sex in the administration of its programs or activities, as required by applicable laws and regulations. NMED is responsible for coordination of compliance efforts and receipt of inquiries concerning non-discrimination requirements implemented by 40 C.F.R. Parts 5 and 7, including Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, as amended; Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973; the Age Discrimination Act of 1975, Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, and Section 13 of the Federal Water Pollution Control Act Amendments of 1972. If you have any questions about this notice or any of NMED's non-discrimination programs, policies or procedures, you may contact: Kate Cardenas, Non-Discrimination Coordinator | NMED | 1190 St. Francis Dr., Suite N4050 | P.O. Box 5469 | Santa Fe, NM 87502 or (505) 827-2855 or nd.coordinator@env.nm.gov. If you believe that you have been discriminated against with respect to a NMED program or activity, you may contact the Non-Discrimination Coordinator.

###