

Darlington Public Event Safety Advisory Group
A10 A - BBQ advice for a community group



A community group planning to include a BBQ as part of an event should first consider its location in relation to other activities, the start and finish time, and the possible variation in weather conditions that may affect storage, cooking and sale of food. They should also consider the competence of volunteers to operate the BBQ safely taking account of the significant risks identified below.

Health and Safety

The risks of burns associated with BBQ's can be managed taking account of:

- The location of the barbeque relevant to any normal access /egress or emergency access/egress routes.
- Using the correct fuel.
- The ventilation requirements.
- The method of lighting.
- The storage of any flammable or explosive materials.
- The distance to combustible materials such as, tents, marquees, inflatables, cars, fencing etc.
- The method of controlling the public near to hot surfaces and flammable/explosive material etc.
- The access to fuel storage including gas cylinders etc. which must be strictly controlled to ensure it cannot be tampered with and it must not be positioned near to escape routes.
- The availability of fire extinguishers, appropriate to the fuel being used, and persons suitably trained and competent to use them.

Food Safety

The storage, cooking and sale of food at a BBQ is associated with a risk of food poisoning due to bacteria such as Campylobacter, Salmonella and E coli. This can be managed by effective temperature control, during storage, cooking and display of food, and taking precautions to prevent contaminating food with bacteria and not preparing food too far in advance of serving it.

Temperature Control:

- Thermometers should be used to check temperatures.
 - High-risk food products such as cooked meat and dairy products, must be kept at or below 8°C or above 63°C.
- sufficient fridge space for the storage of high-risk foods or use of commercial cool boxes or insulated bags and freezer blocks to help keep food cold. If transporting food make sure you have enough clean containers and do the journey quickly, keeping the food at a safe temperature. Check temperatures using a thermometer.

- Ideally food should be prepared immediately before service, if this is not possible then the food should be prepared in small batches and kept at the correct temperature.
- It is essential to cook chicken, beef burgers and sausages to reach a core temperature of 75°C before serving. A probe thermometer is the most effective way of checking the temperature and avoiding overcooking the food. (Take care to clean probes after each use with a disinfectant wipe).
- Hot food displayed for sale/service should be kept above 63°C.
- Protect stored food from public access and contact.

Cross-contamination

Suitable food grade disinfectants or sanitising agents should be used for the regular disinfection of equipment and work surfaces. A list of commercial disinfectants can be found using this link <http://www.disinfectant-info.co.uk>)

- All Food preparation areas/chopping boards, equipment (including knives and containers) should be cleaned/disinfected after use.
- Raw and cooked food should be kept separate at all times, raw food should always be stored below cooked food, ideally separate refrigerators should be used.
- Clean sinks after washing/preparing vegetables and raw food.
- Avoid touching food use tongs etc.
- Disinfect all cloths regularly and replace as soon as they become worn/damaged. The use of disposable cloths and paper towels is recommended.
- Food equipment/utensils/crockery should not be stored on the ground and must be kept away from risk of contamination – recommended height of 45cm above ground and protected from the weather and sources of contamination.
- Protect food from pests (insects, birds and rodents).
- Keep food in appropriate covered containers.

Personal hygiene

- Don't prepare or serve food if you have: any skin, nose or throat trouble; an upset stomach; diarrhoea; or an infected wound. Any person that will be handling food who has suffered symptoms of food poisoning must have been free of symptoms for 48 hours before the event.
- Hand washing must be carried out: Before starting work, after handling any raw foods; after using the toilet; after a break; or after sneezing, coughing, etc.
- Food handlers to keep themselves clean and wear clean clothes and an apron or over-clothing. All cuts or boils should be covered with a waterproof plaster preferably coloured blue.
- Avoid unnecessary handling of food and use tongs or utensils wherever possible.