

Minnesota Food Code Fact Sheet

Safe Food is Good Business



Cooling Potentially Hazardous Foods



Improper cooling of potentially hazardous foods is the number one cause of foodborne illness. Disease causing bacteria grow best in the “temperature danger zone” of 41E F. to 140E F. When potentially hazardous foods are improperly cooled, it provides an ideal environment for bacteria to multiply.

Potentially hazardous foods must be cooled from 140E F. to 70E F. within two hours. An additional four hours is allowed to completely cool the food product to 41E F. The faster foods pass through the “temperature danger zone” as they are cooled, the better.

Cooling Tips

- Never allow food to set on the countertop (room temperature) to cool.
- Refrigerate or chill the food in an ice bath immediately upon removal from the heat source.
- Use the right type of storage container to chill foods:
 - + Divide foods into smaller portions and put into shallow containers.
 - + Metal containers chill foods fastest.
 - Glass and plastic containers take longer to cool foods.

- Allow for air circulation because loosely covered or uncovered foods chill faster. Rapidly chill the food, then cover tightly.
- Where possible, substitute ice for water in a recipe. Add the ice at the end of the cooking process to cool the product rapidly.
- Set containers of food in ice baths and stir frequently.
- Use blast chillers when possible.

For Further Information Contact:

Bemidji	—	(218) 755-3820
Duluth	—	(218) 723-4642
Fergus Falls	—	(218) 739-7585
Mankato	—	(507) 389-2501
Marshall	—	(507) 537-7151
Metro	—	(651) 215-0870
Rochester	—	(507) 285-7289
St. Cloud	—	(320) 255-4216

To request this document in another format, call 651/215-0700, TDD 651/215-0707, or for greater Minnesota through the Minnesota Relay Service at 1/800/627-3529.