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| **Banner Bar** |
| **NPS Arrowhead** | **National Park ServiceUS Department of the Interior** | **Office of Public Health** | **1201 Eye Street, NWRoom 1131Washington, DC 20005Phone: 202-513-7215Fax: 202-371-1349** |
| **Banner Bar** |
| **Office of Public Health - Backcountry Factsheet** |

Back country operations are required to comply with National Park Service (NPS) Public Health Guidelines (DO-83). This checklist is meant to highlight the most important provisions relevant to back country conditions and to provide guidance consistent with existing NPS public health policy.  These guidelines are intended to ensure minimum standards for public health are maintained in the backcountry where front country standards are not achievable.  Backcountry operations need to comply with all items on this checklist.

**HAND WASHING**

* Guest hand washing station is provided near the toilet facilities and the food service and preparation areas. Air drying of hands is okay for guests.
* Food handlers are provided with disposable towels for hand drying.
* The setup does not involve dipping into the clean water container.
* If potable water is not available, hand sanitizers containing 62% ethyl alcohol is acceptable after first washing with untreated water.
* Hand washing water is either potable (see above) or treated with at least 100 ppm liquid chlorine bleach or another approved sanitizer and let stand for 30 minutes.
* Appropriate disinfectant test strips are used to check disinfectant concentration if potable water is not used.
* Foodhandlers will wash their hands immediately before engaging in food preparation, after using the bathroom, and as frequently as needed to prevent contamination of food and utensils.

**FOOD HANDLERS**

* No persons who are ill will be allowed to prepare food. If a person has a gastrointestinal illness they will be restricted from food handling and water treatment for 72 hours after symptoms have resolved.
* Any food handler who has open unprotected cuts or sores is not allowed to prepare food.
* Food handlers are not allowed to eat while preparing meals.
* Guests are not allowed to prepare or handle foods other than their own.

**FOOD STORAGE**

* Potentially hazardous food (including raw eggs) are stored at or below 45°F.
* Approved food grade thermometers are available and used frequently to check cooler temperatures.  Thermometers should be appropriately calibrated.
* Foods will be stored so that they do not contaminate one another. Whenever possible, raw potentially hazardous foods should be stored in a separate cooler. When this is not possible (e.g. single cooler trips), raw potentially hazardous foods must be stored at the bottom of the cooler in durable leak proof containers. Double bagging is not adequate when storing raw potentially hazardous foods in the same cooler as ready to eat foods.
* Food will be stored separately from cleaning supplies, fuel, human waste receptacles or solid waste receptacles.
* All foods are obtained from an approved source.
* Food stored in water or ice is in water proof packaging.

**FOOD PREPARATION**

* Food not prepared "on-site" is prepared in an inspected, licensed and approved food establishment.
* Potentially hazardous foods are not kept in the temperature danger zone (45°-135°F) for longer than 4 hours.
* Raw animal foods such as meat, poultry, fish, eggs, and foods containing these raw animal foods are cooked thoroughly (especially ground beef and chicken). The minimum cooking temperatures specified in the NPS-Public Health Guidelines are:
	+ Poultry and stuffed meats- 165°F
	+ Ground beef and other ground meats - 155°F
	+ Beef, pork, fish, eggs - 145°F
* Potentially hazardous food left over from a meal will not be held for re-service.
* Potentially hazardous food will not be prepared in advance in the backcountry and then cooled down for later service.
* All potentially hazardous foods cooked on site will be consumed or discarded within four hours of preparation.
* Foods must be thawed in coolers or as part of the cooking process.  Frozen foods must not be left out to thaw at ambient temperatures.
* Raw fruits and vegetables are washed using potable water. (This may be done before an outing in an inspected facility.)
* Cutting boards, knives, etc. used for preparing raw meats, poultry, and fish are thoroughly sanitized before being used for the preparation of other food.
* Approved food thermometers are available and used frequently for measuring food temperatures during cooking and holding.

**SANITIZING**

* Dishes, utensils, etc are sanitized in a minimum three-compartment arrangement.
* Wash container contains an approved detergent and hot water.  The water is changed when it becomes dirty.
* Rinse container contains hot water.
* Rinse water is changed when soap and/or grease begin to accumulate on the surface to prevent carryover into the sanitizing water.
* Sanitizing container contains at least 100 PPM chlorine (1 capful of household bleach per gallon of water) or another approved sanitizer.
* Appropriate test strips are used to check the sanitizer concentration.
* Dishes and utensils are air-dried.
* Food-contact surfaces and nonfood-contact surfaces are sanitized between uses and as frequently as needed.
* Wiping cloths are stored in a 100 PPM chlorine solution (1 capful of household bleach per gallon of water) or in another approved sanitizer.
* Sanitizing water is changed when it becomes dirty.
* Wiping cloths are replaced when soiled.

If you have any questions, please contact your nearest Regional Point of Contact, park sanitarian or call WASO Public Health for more information.