

Hand Washing: The Key to Health for You and Your Family

Each year numerous community festivals bring families and businesses together in celebration. This year you and/or your business may be thinking about getting involved by preparing or serving food to the participants or general public at one of these colourful events. **Hand washing when serving food at these events is crucial.** It not only protects yourself and others from food poisoning but also prevents many common infections. It is estimated that 80% of infections, such as colds, sore throats, ear aches, rashes, and flu, are spread by unclean hands.

Here's how to wash your hands:

- Wet your hands under warm running water.
- Scrub all parts of your hands with liquid soap and water for 30 seconds. Make sure you create a good lather, and scrub fingertips and under the nails with a finger nail brush.
- Rinse hands under warm running water to remove the lather from the wrists to the finger tips.
- Use a paper towel to dry your hands.
- Prevent re-contamination by using the paper towel to turn off the taps.

When is a hand wash station required?

No hand wash station

- Serving pre-packaged food does not require a hand washing station at your food booth. For example, handing out pre boxed personal pizza boxes, dispensing coffee, means you do not touch the food so there is little danger of infecting the food or getting infected from another person. Just make sure to wash your hands before and after your food event, and after using the washroom.

Home Made/ Simple Hand Wash Station

- You will need to regularly wash your hands if you are serving/distributing/portioning/ cooking pre-made food such as sweets, or re-heating samosas, pakoras or other foods (made in an approved kitchen). In this instance, you can make your own hand washing station with a coffee urn, liquid soap, paper towels and a container for your waste water (talk to your Health Inspector for more details two weeks before the event: Surrey 604-930-5405 or Abbotsford 604-870-7900).

Portable Plumbed Hand Wash Station

- If you are handling the food in a more involved way such as making the food on-site by chopping food to make a sabzee, daal, or frying foods, you will need a portable sink with hot and cold running water, liquid soap and paper towels to more rigorously wash your hands. These sinks can be rented from party rental stores 2-3 weeks in advance of the event.

Questions? Talk to your local Health Inspector for more details. They are happy to give you free information about how you can protect yourself, others, and your family from infections such as the common cold, food poisoning and even typhoid fevers while serving food at these celebrations.

For more information about food safety, please visit our website: www.fraserhealth.ca/foodsafetyathome