

**OPERATING GUIDELINES:  
TEMPORARY FOOD BOOTHS  
COOK-OFFS/COOKING CHALLENGES**

**Environmental Health District Offices**

**Bullhead City**  
1130 Hancock Rd.  
Bullhead City, AZ 86442  
(928) 758-0704

**Kingman**  
3250 E. Kino Avenue  
Kingman, AZ 86409  
(928) 757-0901

**Lake Havasu City**  
2001 College Dr.  
Lake Havasu City, AZ 86403  
(928) 453-0712

## PLEASE READ!!! Important Information

1. You must obtain a permit prior to the event. Should you be observed operating without a permit, you will be asked to immediately cease operations and close.
2. Permits should be obtained at least 7 days prior to the event to avoid additional fees.
3. All the following guidelines must be followed when operating at a temporary event and/or cook-off.

### Introduction

This information has been developed to help concessionaires set up and run food operations in a sanitary and healthful manner and to minimize the possibility of foodborne illness.

To avoid inconvenience, concessionaires are encouraged to contact the Environmental Health Division (EHD) as early as possible when planning a food booth.

An Environmental Health staff will be pleased to help with you plans. He/she will point out the steps that must be taken to help ensure a sanitary operation that will protect the public from foodborne illness.

### Review of Permit Application

Individuals must apply for a permit in order for the EHD to review the proposed food service techniques. Applications may be obtained from the Mohave County EHD.

An Environmental Health Specialist will review your application and may also make suggestions that will enable your booth to operate more efficiently and safely.



### Definition of Temporary Food Service

1. **Temporary Food Service Establishment:** means and refers to a food establishment that operates at a fixed location in conjunction with a single event or celebration, such as a fair, carnival, circus, public exhibition or similar transitory gathering for not more than 14 consecutive days within any permit year provided it is the same permittee, at the same location and same event. At the termination of the event the temporary food establishment shall be removed from the premises.

Notes:

- For clarification, only one temporary event permit may be obtained by the same permittee, at the same location and type of event in a permit year.
  - Exception: For fundraising purposes only, a non-profit group may obtain up to 4 temporary event permits per year for the same type of event.
2. **Cook-off/Cooking Challenge:** shall mean a cooking or food preparation contest in which participants prepare food, usually using their own recipes, held as a public event with the food for sale or given away to the public (e.g. chili cook-offs, salsa challenges, BBQ challenges, etc.).

### Who needs to get a Temporary Permit?

Individuals or groups planning to hold events that are open to the public must have a permit. The EHD requires that a temporary food permit be purchased for each food booth in operation during an event. If you advertise your event with flyers, banners, newspaper articles, or by other means, it is considered a public event.

### Why is it necessary to apply for a permit?

Temporary permits are required by law. The state food regulations, AAC: Title 9, Ch. 8, Article 1 states that “A person may not operate a food establishment without a valid license to operate issued by the regulatory

authority...the license holder in order to retain the license shall post the license in a location in the food establishment that is conspicuous to consumers...”

**MANY, MANY OUTBREAKS OF FOODBORNE ILLNESS HAVE BEEN TRACED BACK TO IMPROPERLY HANDLED FOOD AT TEMPORARY EVENTS.**

**When should the permit application be returned?**

We recommend the application be returned with the fee a minimum of seven days prior to the event to avoid additional fees. This allows time for the EHD staff to adequately review the application and to make any changes necessary well in advance of the event. You are urged to apply for a permit as early as possible to avoid possible delays in obtaining a temporary permit in time for the proposed event.

**Exemptions**

**Bake Sales:** In accordance with Mohave Food Code 1-201.10(B)(31)(c)(iii), Bake Sales are exempt from the temporary permit requirements if only non-potentially hazardous baked goods are offered for sale or service. Additionally, at the location of sales or service, the consumer must be informed by a clearly visible placard that the food was prepared in a kitchen that is not subject to regulation and inspection by a regulatory authority.

**Arizona Home Baked and Confectionary Goods Exemptions:** Arizona Home Baked and Confectionary Goods participants are exempt from temporary permit requirement if they meet the requirements listed in the AAC R-9-8-102, ARS §36-136(H)(4)(g) and (H)(13) and subsection (B)(10). The participant must be registered with the Arizona Department of Health Services, must obtain a current Mohave County Food Handler Card, and may only sell non-potentially hazardous baked goods and confections.

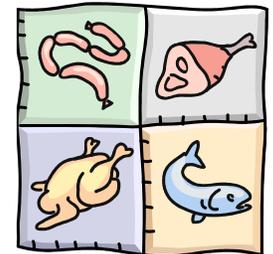
In addition, the following information is required by law to be on a food label for a home baked good or confectionery item when it is offered for sale:

- The address and contact information of the individual registered with the Arizona Department of Health Services; and
- A list of the ingredients in the baked or confectionery goods; and
- A statement that the baked or confectionery goods are prepared in a private home; or
- If applicable, a statement that the baked or confectionery goods are prepared in a facility for individuals with developmental disabilities.

**Food Handling Definitions**

**Potentially hazardous food (time/temperature control for safety food):**

means a food that requires time/temperature control for safety (TCS) to limit pathogenic microorganism growth or toxin formation. These foods include animal foods that are raw or heat-treated; plant foods that are heat treated or consist of raw seed sprouts, cut melons, cut leafy greens, cut tomatoes or mixtures of cut tomatoes that are not modified in a way so that they are unable to support pathogenic microorganism growth or toxin formation, or garlic-in-oil mixtures that are not modified in a way so that they are unable to support pathogenic microorganism growth or toxin formation



Examples are hamburgers, tacos, hotdogs, spaghetti, and chili. Cooked rice, potatoes and beans are also considered to be potentially hazardous.



***Non-potentially hazardous food:*** means foods, such as fruit pies, dry goods and cereals, unconstituted dehydrated foods and baked goods. Examples are cookies, breads, cakes, potato chips, popcorn, cotton candy, and candy bars. An air-cooled hard-boiled egg with shell intact, or an egg with shell intact that is not hard-boiled, but has been pasteurized to destroy all viable salmonellae.

## **Food protection**

1. All foods must be obtained from an approved source. If meat is used at the event, you must indicate on the application where the meat was obtained and have receipts to show proof of purchase.
2. Foods on display must be covered. The public should not be allowed to serve themselves from opened containers. Condiments, such as ketchup, mustard, coffee creamer, sugar, and so forth, should be served preferably in individual packets, or from squeeze containers. Any self-service must be from containers protected by sneeze guards.
3. Bottles or cans of beverages kept in a bucket of ice must be stored so the caps are visible above the ice. These beverages must be served by one of the staff members and not for self-service by the customer to avoid contamination of the bottles or cans.
4. Foods are to be stored at least 6 inches above the ground.

## **Service of foods**

All ready-to-eat foods (those foods that will not be cooked after you touch them) must be handled with utensils or the food handler must wear non-latex gloves. **NO EXCEPTIONS.**

## **REMEMBER:**

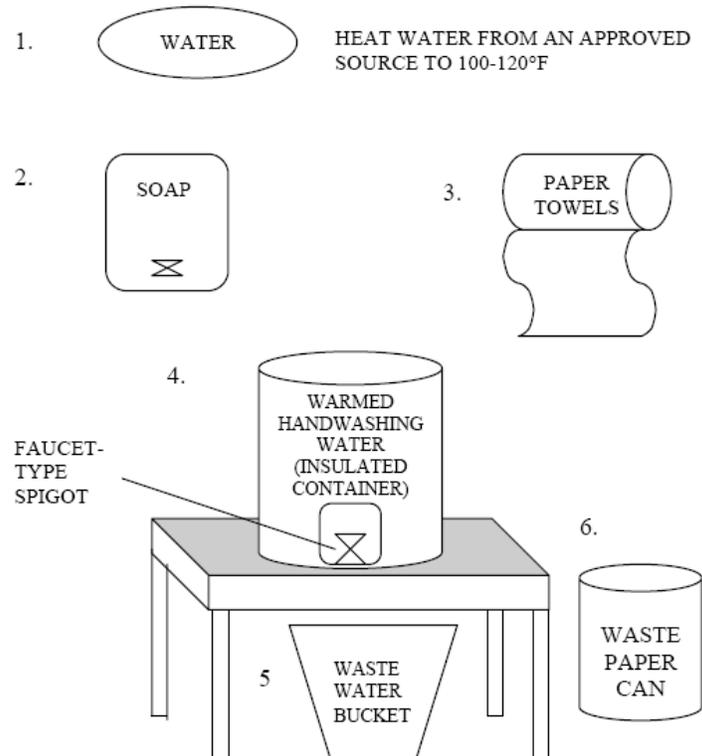
1. Improper cooling, reheating, hot holding and excessive food handling are the major causes of foodborne illness outbreaks. In order to reduce the potential of foodborne illnesses, you **MUST**
  - Avoid cooling and reheating foods. For example, make tacos and burritos to order rather than keeping them hot; cook raw shish-kabob to order instead of cooking ahead of time and hot holding.
  - Avoid hot holding of foods. In order to minimize the possibility of foodborne illness, simplify food handling methods. For example, commercial products, such as store-bought potatoes, macaroni, or pasta salads, are easy to use and easy to handle. We recommend that these products be used, rather than trying to prepare them ahead of time or in the booth.
2. Minimize food handling. For example, used canned chili instead of trying to prepare fresh chili; prepare taco meat just before serving it rather than cooking ahead, cooling, and reheating; use canned refried beans instead of making beans from scratch.

## **Requirements to operate a Temporary Food Establishment**

1. **Toilet Facilities:** Temporary event and cook-off/cooking challenges operators/organizers must provide public toilet facilities in accordance with Arizona Administrative Code Title 8, Article 3.
2. **Booth Construction:** EHD requires booths which handle non-prepackaged foods to be fully enclosed. A staffed service counter may be present provided entry of dust, bird and insect droppings and other contaminants is effectively prohibited.

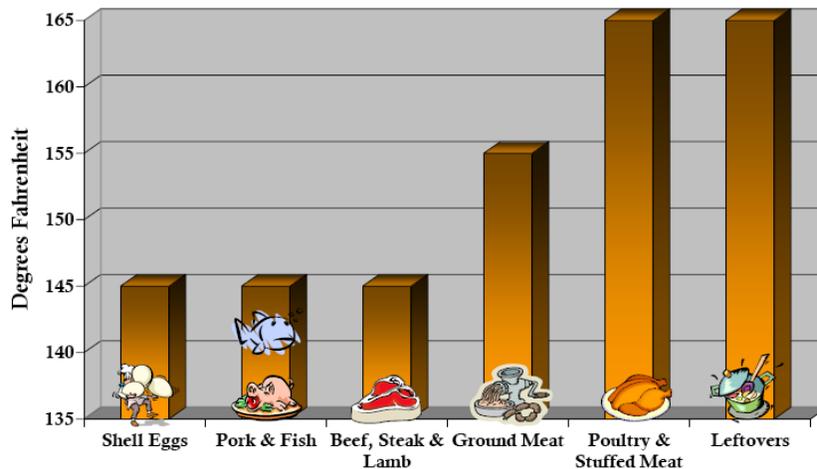
3. **Floors:** if non-prepackaged food is handled, floors, if graded to drain, must be concrete, machine-laid asphalt, or dirt or gravel if it is covered with mats, removable platforms, duckboards, or other suitable approved materials that are effectively treated to control dust and mud and kept in good repair.
4. **Overhead Protection:** required for all food preparation, food storage and ware washing areas. Overhead protection shall be made of wood, canvas, or other materials that protect the facility from precipitation, dust, bird and insect droppings, and other contaminants.
5. **Openings, Windows & Doors:** If non-prepackaged food is handled, all openings shall be protected against the entry of contaminants by 16 mesh to 1 inch screens or other effective means (this does not apply to facilities that are approved for limited food preparation if flying insects, vermin, birds and other pests are absent due to the location of the establishment, the weather or other limiting condition).
6. **Home preparation of foods is not allowed:** All food preparation must be done in the booth or in an approved kitchen facility (i.e., the kitchen is permitted by the Health Department) to minimize the potential for foodborne illness.
7. **Disease:** No person who is infected with a communicable disease, such as a cold, flu, or who has open sores or infected cuts on his/her hands, shall work in any temporary food establishment.
8. **Food Handler Card:** At minimum, one person working in the booth should have valid food handler's card posted.
9. **Handwashing facilities:** This facility shall consist of warm running water, soap, individual paper towels and a bucket to collect the dirty water. For example, an air pump thermos or jug of warm water with a push button or turn spout container will be an acceptable method used to obtain running water.

**HOW TO MAKE AN ALTERNATIVE  
HANDWASHING STATION**



10. **Wiping cloths:** A separate bucket of sanitizer must be present for rinsing/storing wiping cloths to be used on table tops, counters, and so forth. For example, one capful of liquid bleach added to one gallon of cold water will be acceptable. This should be changed frequently during the day.
11. **Dishwashing facilities:** Equipment and utensils must be washed in three compartments/sinks. The process includes washing the utensils/equipment in hot soapy water, rinsing in hot water, sanitizing and air drying. Sponsors of large events must provide a conveniently located, properly plumbed three-compartment sink with hot and cold running water. This facility can then be utilized by several food booths. *A facility may also provide 3 buckets for the dishwashing process. For more information see food handler booklet*
12. **Leftovers: NO leftovers** are to be served or sold in the booth. Hot held foods which have not been used by the end of the day must be discarded.
13. **Refrigeration:** Mechanical refrigeration is requested. However, due to past events during which electrical problems occurred, an ice chest with ice from an approved source (e.g., store-bought, bagged ice) may be better than a poorly operating refrigerator on a hot day. Cold food must be held at 41°F or below
14. **Cooking:** All cooking of foods must be done towards the back of the booth. When barbecuing or using a grill, the equipment must be separated (roped off) from the public by at least 4 feet to protect the public from burns or splashes of hot grease.

**Minimum Cooking Temperatures  
for 15 seconds at the following temperatures**



15. **Hot Holding:** For hot holding, electrical equipment is requested. However, due to past events during which electrical problems occurred, propane stoves or grills capable of holding food at 135°F or above may be used and/or should be available for backup.

Crockpots, steam tables, or other hot holding devices are **NOT** to be used as a means for heating up foods; they are to be used **ONLY** for hot holding purposes. We recommend that foods be heated on the grill or propane stove to bring the food temperature to at least 165°F within 30 minutes. Crock pots, steam tables, or other hot holding devices are slow cooking; food heated with this equipment may take longer than 30 minutes which may activate the multiplication of bacteria.

16. **Thermometer:** A metal-stem thermometer must be available and used to check internal food temperatures. Thermometers must be able to measure from 0°-220°F.



17. **Flammable Materials:** Equipment containing flammable materials, such as deep-fat fryers must be on stable surfaces and shielded from the public (Fire Marshal requirement)

18. **Smoking/Eating/Drinking:** Smoking, eating or drinking in booths while working is not allowed. All non-working, unauthorized persons are to be kept out of the booth.
19. **Water:** Drinkable water must be provided for hand washing, dishwashing, and cooking.
20. **Liquid Waste:** Liquid waste should not be dumped into streets, storm drain, or onto the ground. Use the containers to collect the dirty water and discard in a sanitary manner (e.g., public restrooms or dump station).
21. **Refuse:** A refuse container with a tight-fitting lid should be available for the garbage.
22. **Other Information:**
  - A broom and dust pan should be available for sweeping the floor.
  - Chemicals such as liquid bleach and detergents must be stored in a separate area away from food preparation and display areas.
23. **Critical Item Violations:** All critical item violations, those directly related to foodborne illnesses, must be corrected immediately. All other violations, those related to sanitation, design, and maintenance of the food booth, must be corrected within the time frame determined by the Environmental Health Specialist.

## CHECKLIST

- I have obtained my health permit from Mohave County Environmental Health
- I will use the correct type of booth for the food I will be serving: see #2
- I will provide restrooms as required by the Arizona Administrative Code: see #1
- My food is from approved sources and will not be prepared in a private home
- I have dishwashing facilities: see #8 **\*\*Dishwashing liquid, bleach\*\***
- I have handwashing facilities: see #6  
**\*\*Soap, paper towels, jug of warm water with spigot\*\***
- I have sanitized water for wiping cloths: see #7
- I have a thermometer: see #13
- I have a broom and dust pan: see #18
- I have a food handler card: see #5
- I have a refuse container: see #17
- I have proper hot and cold holding equipment: see #11 and #12
- I will be cooking the food in an EHD approved kitchen or will be cooking the food on-site: see #3
- I will have drinkable water provided either by the event coordinator or by myself: see #16
- I will dispose of liquid waste properly: see #16



**Temporary Food Service Requirements – Mohave County, AZ**

<b>CATEGORY AND TYPE OF FOOD SERVICE</b>	<b>CATEGORY I TEMPORARY FOOD SERVICE</b> (open food preparation)	<b>CATEGORY II TEMPORARY RETAIL FOOD</b> (pre-packaged)	<b>CATEGORY III COOK-OFFS</b>	<b>CATEGORY IV COOKING CHALLENGES</b>	<b>CATEGORY V BAKE SALES*</b> *Non-potentially hazardous food
<b>PERMITS</b>	Temporary Food Service Permit is required	Same as Category I	Cook-Off Permit required	Same as Category III	No permit is required
<b>BOOTH/ STRUCTURE</b>	Floors, walls, roof. No open food on a front counter open to public	Not required if food is pre-packaged & < 10 lineal ft display	Same as Category I	Same as Category I	Not required if food is covered and/or packaged
<b>MENU APPROVAL</b>	Required: Amount and type of food or prep may be restricted	Not required if foods are pre-packaged & < 10 lineal ft display	Same as Category I	Same as Category I	Only non-potentially hazardous goods
<b>HANDWASHING</b>	Minimum of 5 gals water in insulated container with continuous flow spigot, soap, paper towels	Not required	Same as Category I	Same as Category I	Not required if prepackaged foods otherwise, same Category I
<b>THERMOMETERS</b>	Metal stem type thermometer 0 - 220°F or digital thermometer	Same as Category I	Same as Category I	Same as Category I	Not required -no foods require temp. control
<b>REFRIGERATION</b>	Mechanical refrigeration or ice chests capable of holding foods below 41°F	Same as Category I	Same as Category I	Same as Category I	Not required
<b>COOKING EQUIPMENT</b>	Capable of rapid heating. No steam tables or warmers for cooking; unit must be in booth or roped off	N/A	Same as Category I	Same as Category I	Not required
<b>HOT HOLDING EQUIPMENT</b>	Must be preheated and maintain foods >135°F. Sterno or chafing dishes may be restricted	Same as Category I	Same as Category I	Same as Category I	Not required
<b>FOOD CONTACT SURFACES AND UTENSILS</b>	Cleanable and smooth. Including containers for transporting foods.	Same as Category I	Same as Category I	Same as Category I	Same as Category I
<b>WIPE CLOTHS AND BLEACH</b> **maintain 50 ppm	Wipe cloths must be kept in bleach solution-change solution frequently.	Same as Category I	Same as Category I	Same as Category I	Not required, if provided, same as Category I
<b>DISHWASHING FACILITIES</b>	Hot/cold water under pressure, 3-compartment sink, & approved facility on-site OR three buckets, water, soap and bleach	If needed, same as Category I	Same as Category I	Same as Category I	Not required
<b>APPROVED KITCHEN FOR FOOD PREPARED IN ADVANCE</b>	Kitchen facility must be approved by health department. Provide a commissary agreement	Same as Category I	Same as Category I	Same as Category I	Recommended, but not required
<b>FOOD HANDLER CARDS</b>	Req'd of at least 1 person who is present & in charge.	Same as Category I	Same as Category I	Same as Category I	Recommended, but not required
<b>GARBAGE FACILITIES</b>	Adequate for all refuse generated	Same as Category I	Same as Category I	Same as Category I	Same as Category I
<b>APPLICATION AND FEES</b> *check fee schedule	Apply at least 7 days prior to event to avoid additional fees.	Same as Category I	Same as Category I	Same as Category I	Exempt

**NOTES:**

1. Provide sanitizer test strips to ensure bleach solutions are kept in proper range
2. An establishment that has a food service permit and wants to prepare or serve food at a temp. event, must obtain a temporary event permit in order to do so.
3. **FOOD MAY NOT BE PREPARED IN PRIVATE KITCHEN. IT MUST BE PREPARED ON-SITE OR IN A HEALTH DEPARTMENT APPROVED KITCHEN (unless food falls under exemption specified in guidelines).**