



# Public Health Information Sheet

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Desert Southwest  
505-988-6040

Pacific West/Pacific  
Islands/Alaska  
510-817-1375  
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## Web Resources

**NPS Public Health:**  
[http://www.nps.gov/public\\_ health/intra/](http://www.nps.gov/public_health/intra/)

**CDC:**  
<http://www.cdc.gov>  
Hotline: 888-246-2675

**State and Local Health Departments:**  
[http://www.cdc.gov/mmwr/ international/relres.html](http://www.cdc.gov/mmwr/international/relres.html)

## Backcountry Operations

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. The back country expedition needs to comply with all items on this checklist.

### POTABLE WATER

Water used for drinking, and culinary purposes is obtained from a source known to be free of chemical contamination and is either:

- Boiled by bringing to a rolling boil for 1 minute (Add an additional minute for each 1,000 feet above sea level)
- or
- Filtered through an "Absolute" 1 micron filter, or one labeled as meeting American National Standards Institute (ANSI/NSF) (formerly the National Sanitation Foundation) International Standard #53 for "Cyst Removal" followed by. Add 8 drops of bleach or 20 drops of tincture of iodine per gallon of water and let stand for 30 minutes.

Water storage containers are free of contamination when in use and washed and sanitized as needed.

### WASTE DISPOSAL

All human, food and solid wastes are disposed of in a manner consistent with NPS-Public Health, park policy and all applicable health and environmental laws and regulations.

In environmentally sensitive areas such as river corridors, etc., human feces and other solid wastes are either disposed onsite in approved facilities or transported offsite to approved facilities.

### HAND WASHING- GUESTS

- The guest hand washing station is near toilet facilities. Air drying of hands is okay for guests.
- The setup does not involve dipping into the clean water container.
- If potable water is not available, the 62% alcohol hand washing product is acceptable.
- Guests are instructed on the importance of hand washing after using the toilet facilities.

### HAND WASHING- FOOD HANDLERS

- Hand washing station is convenient to food preparation area.
- The setup does not involve dipping into the clean water container.
- If potable water is not available, the 62% alcohol hand washing product is acceptable.
- The 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.
- Soap and paper towels are provided.
- Food handlers wash their hands frequently and; before handling food; after handling raw meat; after eating, drinking, and smoking; and any other time their hands become contaminated.

## FOOD HANDLERS

- At least one guide is a certified food handler.
- Any food handler who is ill or who has open unprotected cuts or sores is not allowed to prepare food.
- Food handlers are not allowed to snack while preparing meals.
- Guests are not allowed to prepare or handle foods other than their own.

## FOOD STORAGE

- Toxic materials are stored separately from foods.
- Potentially hazardous food (including raw eggs) are stored at or below 41°F .
- Approved thermometers are available and used frequently to check cooler temperatures.
- Raw meats are stored so that they will not contaminate other foods. (They should be stored in separate coolers. When this is not practical, they may be stored in leak proof containers at the bottom of coolers containing other foods.)
- Packaged foods are not stored in contact with ice or water. (unless the packages are waterproof).
- Unpackaged foods are not stored in direct contact with undrained ice. (except raw fruits and vegetables).
- All foods are obtained from an approved source.
- Foods not prepared "on-site" are prepared in an inspected, licensed and approved food establishment.
- Potentially hazardous foods are stored in the temperature danger zone (41°-140°F) for no 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 NPS-Public Health Guidelines should always be attained.
- Raw eggs are not pooled unless they are to be thoroughly cooked promptly after pooling. Pasteurized egg products are recommended for such use in the back country.
- Potentially hazardous foods are not held for re-service.
- Frozen potentially hazardous foods are thawed at ambient temperatures. Thawing in coolers is recommended.
- Raw fruits and vegetables are washed. (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.
- Wash 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 50-100 PPM chlorine (1 capful of household bleach per gallon of water) or another approved sanitizer.
- Appropriate test strips are used to check the disinfectant concentration.
- Dishes and utensils are air-dried.
- Food-contact surfaces and nonfood- contact surfaces are sanitized per NPS Public Health Guidelines.
- Wiping cloths are stored in a 200 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 either discarded or washed when soiled.

If you have any questions, please contact a Regional Public Health Consultant, park sanitarian or call WASO Public Health for more information at 202-513-7226.

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