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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Grill It or Chill It: Food Safety Matters!
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July is the best time for barbeques and cookouts, and with warmer weather comes an increased chance of foodborne illnesses. Bacteria can multiply in warmer temperatures, making summer the prime time for these to spike. “Practicing proper food safety will ensure that your gathering is memorable for all the right reasons!” says Erica Logsdon, Environmental Health Manager. “We want everyone to have a safe and enjoyable summer sharing meals with loved ones.” You can keep yourself and your family protected from foodborne illnesses by following a few simple steps.

Good hand washing can prevent the spread of illness. Be sure to wash your hands using soap and water for at least 20 seconds before and after touching food. Don’t forget the hand sanitizer if you are going to be somewhere without soap and water, like an outdoor event.

It’s also important to keep hot foods at 135°F or above and cold foods at 41°F or below until served. To prevent food from spoiling, do not leave food sitting out at room temperature. When transporting cold foods to your next event, always use coolers or insulated containers to keep food at a safe, cold temperature below 41°F.

Grilling is a go-to this time of year. When cooking, keep raw meat separate from ready-to-eat food. Remember, never use a plate that has been touched by raw meat, unless it has been cleaned in hot soapy water.

Use a meat thermometer when grilling and follow the guidelines below when cooking meat:

- Roasts and steaks are cooked to an internal temperature of at least 145°F
- Poultry is cooked to an internal temperature of at least 165°F
- Ground meat is cooked to an internal temperature of at least 155°F
- Seafood is cooked to an internal temperature of at least 145°F

Keep your family healthy and safe this summer by remembering the importance of food safety! If you have additional questions, contact the Environmental Health Team at 417-334-4544 ext. 593, visit our website at www.taneycohealth.org, or like our Facebook, Instagram, LinkedIn, and X pages.

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As a leader in health, the Taney County Health Department serves Taney County residents and visitors in pursuit of a healthy lifestyle and environment. The Taney County Health Department’s mission is to create a healthy and safe community for people to live, work, and play, today and in the future. Caring, serving, and protecting Taney County since 1961. Please visit our website www.taneycohealth.org to learn more about our services.