

# What You Need to Know about Hot Holding Foods

## Hot Holding Stops Germ Growth

Germs, like bacteria, that can cause foodborne illness grow on foods kept at unsafe temperatures. Keeping hot foods ready to serve to the public is known as “hot holding”.

Hot holding stops germs from growing when food is kept at hot temperatures. This lowers the risk that someone will get sick from eating food.

## Check the Temperature Often

Thermometers should be used to check the temperatures of foods in hot holding. Here is how to check the temperature of foods in hot holding:

- MEAT: Stick the thermometer in the thickest part of the meat.
- SOLID FOODS: Stick the thermometer in different spots in the food.
- LIQUID FOODS: Stick the thermometer in the middle of the food and stir.

## Make Sure to Chill, Label, and Reheat Food That Will Be Reused

Any foods in hot holding that will be reused in the future must be chilled to 41°F or below within 6 hours of being taken out of hot holding.

Food must be labeled with the time and date it was first prepared.

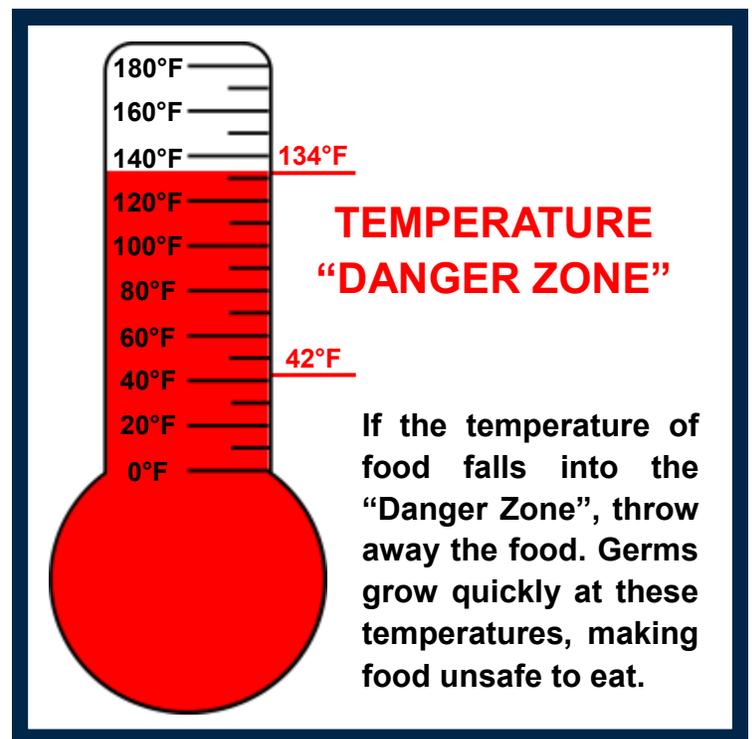
Food must be reheated to 165°F and reused within 7 days of being prepared. Food not used within 7 days must be thrown away.

## Keep Hot Foods Out of the “Danger Zone”

Foods that have temperatures that fall between 42°F and 134°F are considered to be in the “Danger Zone”.

Germs that can cause foodborne illness grow very quickly on foods held at temperatures in the “Danger Zone”.

Foods kept in hot holding must stay at or above 135°F at all times. Foods that fall into the “Danger Zone” must be thrown away.



**Public Health**  
Prevent. Promote. Protect.

## Hendricks County Health Department Food Protection Program

**Hendricks County Government Center**  
355 South Washington Street, #210  
Danville, IN 46122

**Office:** (317) 745-9217  
**Fax:** (317) 745-9218  
[www.co.hendricks.in.us](http://www.co.hendricks.in.us)