

HEALTH DEPARTMENT HAS NEW REQUIREMENTS FOR NON-PROFIT FUNDRAISERS

It's chicken barbecue season again and the Broome County Firefighters' Association would like to remind you about the Broome County Health Department 's requirements for non-profits holding food related fundraisers:

While the New York State Sanitary Code does provide exemption for religious, fraternal and charitable organizations, the Broome County Health Department has now laid down some new requirements for these organizations. Matthew Laine, a Public Health Sanitarian and Sean Britton, a Deputy Public Health Director, spoke to firefighters at the November 2015 meeting and advised attendees about these new requirements:

- If your fire company intends to do any food fundraisers over the next two years they need to send a letter to the Broome County Health Department, 225 Front Street, Binghamton, NY 13905 to notify them that your organization plans to do food events in the next two years. This letter needs to be sent every two years if you are continuously doing food events.
- Your members who are handling food at these events need to take a food safety class online at <http://www.gobroomecounty.com/eh/temporary-food-service-safety-class>. Click on the "Temporary Food Safety Class". Read through the food safety presentation, take the quiz, and fill out the certificate at the end with your name. This certification should be retained by someone at your fire company to verify that your food handlers have taken this class. This class must be taken each year.
- At least two weeks before your food event you need to send a letter or e-mail to the Health Department requesting permission to hold a food fundraiser. In your letter you need to give them information on your event including the location, time and menu. Include the number of people involved in the event who have taken the Temporary Food Safety Class.
- The Health Department will respond with a letter giving you permission to hold the event. They also may stop in at your event to certify that you are following the guidelines set forth in the food service class.

Note that a permanent food safety class is given on the second Monday of each month. This is a four-hour class and there is no cost to attend. The class starts promptly at 1 pm but you should arrive at least 15 minutes early. The class is held in Conference Rooms B and C of the Health Department office at 225 Front street in Binghamton. Topics covered in the food safety class included - pathogens, hygiene, receiving and storage, preparation and cooking, and sanitation. The class is led by an experienced instructor and supplemented with Powerpoints and videos. An open book test is given at the end of class. Upon successful completion a certificate is issued by the Health Department.

The Health Department also advises that the following equipment should be on hand for any food events:

- Thermometers to check food temperature
- Coolers or heaters to keep food the proper temperature

- Utensils that are properly cleaned
- Gloves and hair restraints (hats, hair nets, etc.)

They also advised that cooking surfaces, such as barbecue grates or utensils cannot be galvanized but must be stainless steel. Galvanized utensils are coated with zinc and under certain

conditions can cause zinc poisoning. To submit your letter requesting permission for an event you can mail your letter to the address above, or e-mail mlaine@co.broome.ny.us. If you have questions you can contact Matthew Laine at the above e-mail or call him at (607) 778-2847.