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## DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH County of Riverside

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INFORMATIONAL BULLETIN NO. 64-09-DES

DISTRICT ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES DIVISION

### OPEN-AIR BARBECUES

#### What is an open-air barbecue?

As defined in Section 113843 of California Health & Safety Code, “Open-Air Barbecue” means a piece of equipment designed for barbecuing food, where the food is prepared out of doors by cooking directly over hot coals, heated lava, hot stones, gas flame, or other method approved by the Riverside County Department of Environmental Health. This equipment shall be suitably designed and maintained for use out of doors. Flat grills, smokers, or griddles, even if ANSI approved, are not considered ‘open-air barbecues’ and will not be approved for outdoor use.

#### What facilities are allowed to have an open-air barbecue?

The open-air barbecue must be located on the same premises as, or in reasonable proximity to, and operate in conjunction with, a permanent food facility that is approved for food preparation. ‘Reasonable proximity’ means that the barbecue must be close enough to the facility to allow for adequate hand washing and clean up; no more than 200 feet walking distance. A temporary food facility at a community event that has been approved by this Department may also use an approved open-air barbecue set-up. A facility may only be approved for an open-air barbecue if it has the required sinks, storage, finishes, and equipment to support the preparation, storage, and serving of food from the barbecue unit. An open-air barbecue **may not** be operated in any area or location that may constitute a fire hazard, as determined by the enforcement officer.

#### Where can the open-air barbecue be located?

You must follow all local zoning and fire department requirements for placement of the open-air barbecue at your facility. In addition, the open-air barbecue must be located in an area and operated in such a manner that suitably protects the food and equipment from dust, dirt, and overhead contaminants when being used and when being stored. The floor surface under and around an open-air barbecue must be smooth, easily cleanable, and made of metal, tile, concrete, asphalt, or other acceptable impervious material that will inhibit the generation of dust and extends a minimum of five feet on all sides. Restroom and hand washing facilities must be on the same premises as the onsite food facility and within 200 feet from the open-air barbecue. No live animals, birds, or fowl are to be kept or allowed within 20 feet of the open-air barbecue. The open-air barbecue must be separated from public access by approved barriers to prevent customer injury or food contamination.

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### What types of barbecue units are approved?

The barbecue unit and all accessory equipment associated with it must be made of non-toxic materials and constructed so as to be readily and easily cleanable. The barbecue unit must be specifically designed for its intended use, kept clean, and maintained in good repair. Proof of materials used in the construction of the unit may be required.

### What food products may be cooked on an open-air barbecue?

Only foods that can be placed directly upon the grill may be cooked on an open-air barbecue. All food of animal origin shall be cooked to the following minimum internal temperatures.

- The minimum internal temperature of fish and single pieces of meat is **145°F or above for 15 seconds**.
- The minimum internal temperature for ratites, injected meat, comminuted meat (such as hamburgers), and foods containing raw eggs is **155°F or above for 15 seconds**.
- The minimum internal temperature for poultry, comminuted poultry, stuffed fish, stuffed meat, stuffed poultry, and stuffed ratites is **165°F or above for 15 seconds**.

No food preparation may take place out-of-doors except the barbecuing of foods on the open-air barbecue and the application of condiments to the foods barbecued. Approved condiments in squeeze bottles, single service containers, or other approved dispensing systems may be made available out-of-doors when open-air barbecues are used. Covered pans may be used for transporting cooked meat from the barbecue to the facility. Plates that are unprotected should not be used. No foil, pans, bowls, trays or other containers may be placed on the barbecue unit.

### What are the requirements for the people cooking the food?

All employees cooking or serving food from an open-air barbecue shall have their hair confined, wear clean, washable outer garments and shall refrain from eating, drinking or using tobacco in any form while working at the open-air barbecue.

Employees operating any BBQ must properly wash their hands often enough to prevent contamination. Extra precautions or additional employees stationed at the BBQ may be required to help eliminate any potential cross contamination. This includes but is not limited to:

- A separate and specific employee to handle money only.
- An employee stationed at the BBQ while another employee leaves the unit to wash their hands.

NOTE: Approved hand washing station(s) may be required to be located next to the BBQ to facilitate proper hand washing.

How shall food on the open-air barbecue be maintained after cooking?

All potentially hazardous foods shall be held at or below 41°F or at or above 135°F at all times. An accurate probe thermometer suitable for measuring the temperature of the potentially hazardous food shall be kept readily available and used to verify proper food temperatures. Foods that are cooked on the open-air barbecue may be dispensed directly from the open-air barbecue using sanitary utensils from the food facility or returned to the food facility for serving from a warming unit or steam table. All food that is to be cooked or that has been cooked on an open-air barbecue shall at all times be protected from any contamination. The BBQ shall not be used for hot holding of foods. Placing the food in cooking utensils (i.e. pots and pans) and then placing the utensil over the heat source is not permitted. No barbecue unit may be operated under conditions in which the foods are likely to become contaminated, rendered unwholesome or otherwise adulterated (e.g. inclement weather).

What is required for proper clean up and storage of the barbecue?

All food waste or rubbish associated with an open-air barbecue shall be placed in disposable bags or stored in non-absorbent, rodent proof containers with tight fitting lids. All equipment associated with an open-air barbecue must be returned to approved clean-up and storage facilities at the end of each day's use and shall not interfere with the sanitary operation of the approved on-site facility. The storage facility shall be available for inspection during periods when the open-air barbecue is not in operation. Approved storage facilities shall include accommodations that will properly protect the equipment from contamination when the open-air barbecue is not in use.

Who is responsible for the open-air barbecue?

The permit holder of the permanent food facility, temporary food facility, or mobile food facility where the open-air barbecue is located is responsible for ensuring that it is operated in full compliance with all applicable regulations.

Note: All necessary approvals and permits from local fire, building authorities, and any other appropriate agency, shall be obtained for all BBQs. A BBQ shall not be operated in any area or location that may constitute a fire hazard, as determined by the enforcement officer or fire authority. All BBQ facilities must follow all local zoning regulations.

All BBQs shall comply with the general food safety requirements as set forth in California Retail Food Code (Section 113980- et. Seq.).

You will need to contact your local EH office if you are considering installing or use of an open air BBQ, as an on-site evaluation and/or plan submission may be required.

If you have any questions, please contact this Department at the number listed below.

\*Document available in an alternate format upon request

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