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News Release

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Clark County Health District Issues Precautions for a Safe Holiday Weekend

(Las Vegas, Nev. – July 1, 1999) – The Clark County Health District is reminding all residents and visitors of Clark County to take the proper precautions to ensure a safe holiday weekend. These precautions include water safety and properly preparing food to safeguard against foodborne illness.

To date the Health District has recorded four fatalities and 35 near drownings in children up to 12 years of age. Children need to be constantly supervised when they have access to a family pool or any amount of standing water. An accident can happen in the time it takes to answer a telephone and drowning is often referred to as the “Silent Death” because there is no cry for help and very little sound from splashing.

An adult should be assigned to supervise children at all times, and pool owners should install “layers of protection.” These layers include a non-climbable five-foot fence that separates a pool or spa from the residence. Openings should not be more than four inches wide and gates should be self-latching and never left unlocked. Adults should also take the proper precautions when participating in water-related recreational activities.

Another popular holiday activity is grilling outdoors. Safe grilling techniques include taking meat and poultry straight home from the store and refrigerating immediately,

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marinating foods in the refrigerator, not reusing marinade unless it is boiled, pre-cooking immediately before placing food on the grill and not using the same platter and utensils for raw and cooked meats.

Food should be stored at 40 F or below and ground meats should be cooked to 160 F, beef, veal and lamb steaks, roasts and chops may be cooked to 145 F. All cuts of pork to 160 F, whole poultry and thighs should reach 180 F and breasts, 170 F. Thorough cooking is the best means to ensure bacteria in meat has been destroyed. E. coli, a strain of bacteria that has caused numerous outbreaks of foodborne disease, can survive both refrigerator and freezer storage.

Following these precautions will help to ensure a safe and festive 4th of July weekend.

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