Middle-Brook Regional Health Commission

www.middlebrookhealth.org

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September Newsletter 2025

Latest in Public Health and Upcoming Events

Emergency Preparedness Program at Warren Library Branch

Join the Middle-Brook Regional Health Commission and Somerset County Department of Health at Warren Township Library Branch on **Tuesday, September 16 from 6:30pm to 7:30pm** for a presentation on Emergency Preparedness. Participants will learn how to take steps to be prepared before, during, and after an emergency or disaster.

Registration is required and space is limited. To register, please visit**:** sclsnj.org.

2025 Community Vaccine Clinics

The Middle-Brook Regional Health Commission and Green Brook Family Medicine are holding community vaccine clinics this fall. Join us on **Wednesday, September 24 or Wednesday, October 22 from 3:00pm to 6:00pm** at the Warren Township Courthouse - 46 Mountain Blvd, Warren 07059.

Pre-registration is requested. For more information, click here. To register, visit: warren-vax.timetap.com. Questions? Call us at 732-968-5151.

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Food Safety

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September is Food Safety Awareness Month! Foodborne illness, or food poisoning, happens when individuals eat food contaminated by bacteria, viruses, parasites, or toxins. Contamination occurs when food is improperly stored or prepared. Follow the steps tips below and practice food safety!

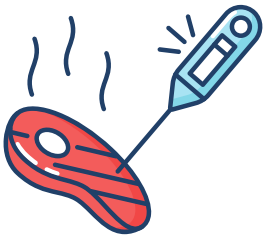
Everyone is at risk for foodborne illness. Infants, young children, pregnant women, older adults, and people with weakened immune systems are at greater risk of developing a more serious illness or death. Signs of severe foodborne illness include bloody diarrhea, diarrhea that lasts more than 3 days, fever over 102°F, vomiting so often that you cannot keep liquids down, and signs of dehydration.

If you or your family member think they are experiencing foodborne illness, call and visit a healthcare provider.

Prep It

- Wash your hands with warm water and soap for at least 20 seconds before you start and after you touch raw meat.
- Throw out cans that are bulging, dented at the seams, or improperly sealed.
- Wash fruits and vegetables.

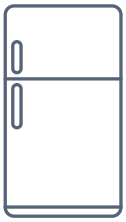
Cook It



- Use separate tools and cutting boards for raw meats, or prepare them last.
- Check your temperatures: 165F for poultry, 155F for ground meat, and 145F for pork, beef, and fish.
- After cooking, let meat rest for 3 minutes before eating.

Save It for Later

- Refrigerate leftovers within 2 hours of cooking.
- Store large amounts of leftovers, such as a big pot of soup, in multiple small containers to cool properly.
- Eat leftovers within 3-4 days if kept in the fridge, or within 3-4 months if kept in the freezer.



For more information, visit: www.fsis.usda.gov/food-safety/

Preparedness Corner

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National Emergency Preparedness Month

September is National Preparedness Month, because protecting yourself and your family starts before the emergency. Stay ready by taking simple precautions:

Practice makes perfect. Have your household practice evacuating so everyone knows their responsibilities, what belongings to grab, and where to go.

Get your Go-Kit go-ready. Stock a bag with a three-day supply of essential items such as water, non-perishable food, matches, flashlights, battery-powered radio, spare batteries, local maps, personal hygiene and sanitation supplies, and a first aid kit. Store it in a safe and accessible place, and regularly check items' expiration dates so it is ready in case of an emergency.

Be the first to know. Sign up for emergency alerts from the National Weather Service and Somerset County to stay informed.

For more information, visit: middlebrookhealth.org

Do Your Part, Be Septic Smart!

September 15-19 is Septic Smart Week, hosted by The National Environmental Health Association and the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency. Properly caring for your septic system can protect your property, and your watershed. Remember:

What goes in…

Avoid clogging your drains. Dispose of fats and grease in sealed containers in the trash. Toilet paper is safe to flush; but diapers, wipes, feminine hygiene products, coffee grounds, cigarette butts, and cat litter are not.

Must come out…

Protect your septic field. Tree and shrub roots, cars, and livestock can compact your disposal area and damage your pipes. Prevent sewage back-ups by professionally pumping your septic system every 3-5 years.

For more information, visit: epa.gov/septic

Recipe of the Month

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STUFFED SUMMER SQUASH

Ingredients

- 2 medium summer squash
- 3 cups cooked brown rice
- 1 cup diced tomatoes
- 1 cup squash pulp (from summer squash listed above)
- 1 cup white beans, drained and rinsed
- 1 tablespoon fresh basil
- 4 tablespoons Parmesan cheese

(4 Servings)

Directions

1. Wash hands with soap and water.
2. Preheat oven to 350 degrees F.
3. Wash and cut squash in half, lengthwise. Remove the large seeds.
4. Steam the squash, skin side down, in a small amount of water in a fry pan or skillet until slightly tender (but not mushy).
5. Scoop out a good amount of pulp (1 cup), place in a bowl and mix with stuffing (brown rice through Parmesan cheese).
6. Place the squash shells in a baking dish. Stuff the squash with the stuffing mixture.
7. Top with grated Parmesan cheese. Bake in preheated oven for about 30 minutes.

Stuffing Variations

- **Rice + Turkey Stuffing:** 1 cup squash pulp, 1 pound cooked ground turkey, 2 cups cooked brown rice, 1 can low-sodium condensed cream of mushroom soup, 2 tablespoons shredded cheddar cheese

- **Cornbread Stuffing:** 2 cups squash pulp, 2 cups cornbread stuffing from a mix, dry, 1 cup diced cook chicken or ham, 1/4 cup raisins, 1/4 cup almonds or other nuts

For more recipes, visit: myplate.gov