

## NEWS RELEASE

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### **The Importance of Food Thermometers in Refrigeration**

[Florence, WI] –

Kitchen refrigeration is an effective tool used in protecting yourself, family and friends from foodborne illness. Assuring proper temperatures are maintained in the refrigeration is one of the best ways to slow the growth of dangerous bacteria.

Bacteria responsible for foodborne illnesses can multiply rapidly. At room temperature, bacteria can double in number every 20 minutes (USDA, January 2017). Keeping foods properly chilled is an effective method to slow their growth. An easy and cheap way to make sure the ambient (air) temperature of your refrigerator is at 41°F or below is to put a thermometer in it. Some units come with a digital thermometer, so all you need to do is assure it's set at 41°F or less. Freezer should be at 0°F. Check the thermometers often to prevent food spoilage.

Other ways to make foods in the refrigerator are as safe as possible include checking expiration dates on foods, clean and organize the unit routinely, and avoid overpacking so air can circulate around items in the fridge.

For more information, visit <https://www.fsis.usda.gov/food-safety>. The health department is located on the second floor, 501 Lake Avenue in the Florence County Courthouse, open Monday through Thursday and by appointment. Need health insurance? Visit [access.wi.gov](http://access.wi.gov) to see if you qualify for benefits.

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