

Larry Hartig
Commissioner

P.O. Box 111800
Juneau, AK 99011-1800

www.dec.alaska.gov



Lynda Giguere
Information Officer

907.465.5009
cell: 907.321.5491

lynda.giguere@alaska.gov

Press Release

COMMISSIONER'S OFFICE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Ron Klein, Food Safety Program Manager, (907) 269-7583, cell: (907) 351-4184

DEC Warns Consumers about Frozen Chicken and Turkey Pot Pies

(Juneau, AK)--The Alaska Department of Environmental Conservation is warning the public not to eat Frozen Banquet chicken or turkey pot pies manufactured by ConAgra, as they may be contaminated with Salmonella. Grocery stores and chains also sell the ConAgra products under their own or other brand names. In all cases, products included in this advisory will have a 'P-9' printed on the side of the box. Approximately 139 people in the contiguous United States have fallen ill between Jan. and Oct. 9, 2007. This product has been found in Alaska; however, no illnesses have been reported here.

The U.S. Department of Agriculture is advising consumers not to eat these chicken or turkey pot pie products. To be safe, consumers should either discard the products, or return them to the store where they were purchased. Alaska retail stores are being asked to remove the products from their shelves.

Symptoms of *Salmonella* include diarrhea, fever, and abdominal cramps 12-72 hours after infection. Infection is usually diagnosed with a culture from a stool sample. The illness usually lasts 4 - 7 days. Although most people recover without treatment, severe infections may occur. Infants, elderly persons, and people with impaired immune systems are more likely than others to develop severe illness. In severe infection, *Salmonella* spreads from the intestines to the bloodstream and then to other body sites and death can occur if the person is not treated promptly with antibiotics.

If you have eaten these products and have these symptoms, please see your health care provider.

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Note: What you can do to prevent the spread of food borne illness:

Follow a few simple practices:

- **Store your foods appropriately.** Place meats in your refrigerator near the bottom shelf so no juices will drip into your produce or other foods that you will not cook. Thaw meats in the cooler.
- **Cook to the correct temperature.** Cooking by sight doesn't tell you if you've killed bacteria like e. Coli. For cooking at home remember: chicken/poultry 165 degrees, egg dishes 160 degrees, ground meats 160 degrees, pork 160 degrees, fish 145 degrees and vegetables 135 degrees. Keep hot foods hot and cold foods cold.
- **Wash your hands.** Running water, soap and a little friction action for just 20 seconds can eliminate many of the bacteria that contribute to illnesses.

For more information about food borne illnesses log onto DEC's website at: <http://www.dec.state.ak.us/eh/fss/foodborne/foodborne.htm>

Sign up for recall alerts by email at

<http://www.dec.state.ak.us/eh/fss/recalls/recallsalerts.htm>

NOTE: Access news releases and other information at the Food Safety and Inspection Service's Web site at

http://www.fsis.usda.gov/Fsis_Recalls/

Consumers with food safety questions can "Ask Karen," the FSIS virtual representative available 24 hours a day at AskKaren.gov. The toll-free USDA Meat and Poultry Hotline 1-888-MPHotline (1-888-674-6854) is available in English and Spanish and can be reached from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. (Eastern Time) (Eastern Time) Monday through Friday. Recorded food safety messages are available 24 hours a day.

For ConAgra, www.conagrafoods.com.

For the USDA, www.usda.gov

For FDA, <http://www.fda.gov/opacom/7alerts.html>

