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## Press Release

COMMISSIONER'S OFFICE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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### **Egg Safety for the Holidays**

(JUNEAU, AK)- Easter is almost here and eggs may be a part of your family celebration. The Alaska Department of Environmental Conservation is encouraging food safety awareness when cooking and handling eggs this weekend:

Here are some tips for safely preparing eggs for the holidays:

#### **Shop Carefully**

Choose refrigerated eggs that are not cracked.

#### **Chill**

- Eggs, raw or cooked, should not be kept at room temperature for more than two hours.
- Do not keep eggs, raw or cooked, in the refrigerator door; place them in the coolest part of the refrigerator.
- Cooked eggs may be stored in the refrigerator in a sealed container, in the shell, peeled, or pickled, for up to one week.
- If you pack cooked eggs in your lunch, include an ice pack to keep them cold.

#### **Clean**

Wash your hands, utensils, cutting boards, and counters carefully with soap and warm water before and after handling raw eggs.

#### **Cook**

- Raw eggs can contain harmful bacteria. Egg-based foods should be cooked to 165 F for safety and serve egg dishes immediately after cooking.
- If you are preparing uncooked, homemade foods that use raw eggs, such as Caesar salad dressing or icing, use pasteurized egg products instead of raw eggs.

### **Dyed Eggs for Hiding and Hunting**

- Decorated eggs that have been left out on display are not safe to eat. If you want to eat eggs that you decorate, hard-boil the eggs thoroughly and cool them by immersing them in cold water before putting them back in the refrigerator.
- When decorating, be sure to use non-toxic dyes. It is safe to use commercial egg dyes, liquid food coloring, and fruit-drink powders.
- When handling cooked eggs, be careful not to crack them to avoid bacteria entering the egg through the cracks in the shell.
- When hiding eggs, place them in locations that are protected from dirt, pets and other potential sources of contamination. Total time for hiding and hunting eggs should not exceed two hours.

### **Hollowed Out Eggshells for Decorating**

Because some raw eggs may contain Salmonella, use caution when blowing out the contents to hollow the shell for decorating.

- Use un-cracked, refrigerated eggs.
- Wash the egg in hot water and then rinse in a solution of 1 teaspoon liquid chlorine bleach per 1/2 cup of cool water or use pasteurized eggs.
- If you want to use the contents of the blown out egg, refrigerate the contents and use them within two to four days.

For more information on food safety, visit DEC's website at: [www.dec.state.ak.us/eh/fss](http://www.dec.state.ak.us/eh/fss).



Example of a pasteurized egg (note red circle “P” stamped on egg).

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