
HEALTH DEPARTMENT
NEWS RELEASE



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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It's "All Hands on Deck" for KCHD staff at Festival of the Arts.

GRAND RAPIDS – Now in its 46th year, Festival of the Arts (Festival) has become almost as well known for its food offerings as it has for the arts and music. This year it is estimated that more than 100,000 meals will be served by volunteers during the three day Festival of the Arts June, 5th, 6th, and 7th.

"Making certain that all of that food is handled, prepared, and delivered to the consumer safely is one of the biggest projects we will undertake all year," says Shane Green, Supervising Sanitarian with the Kent County Health Department.

A team of ten sanitarians has already been working with food vendors for months by the time the first meal is served to protect the public from potential foodborne illnesses (food poisoning). Staff on site will work to ensure food is stored, cooked and held properly as well as inspect the temporary food booths for hygienic practices and sanitary conditions.

"Since most of the people who are working with the food are volunteers, they may not have as highly developed skills as food professionals," says Green. "We are well prepared to educate and assist them so that they are able to offer a huge variety of food from temporary facilities, in as safe a manner as possible."

Kent County Health Department Sanitarians will remain on site throughout the event continuously monitoring conditions and enforcing food safety regulations.

The Kent County Health Department is welcoming interested members of the media to follow staff sanitarians as they make their inspections on the Festival site. You will be able to get video and pictures of inspections as they happen and interview KCHD staff regarding procedures, importance of the inspections and the magnitude of the operation.

If you are interested in arranging a tour please contact Steve Kelso, Marketing and Communications Director, KCHD at your earliest convenience.

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KCHD has been in the business of providing health services to Kent County since 1931. The Health Department is home to nearly 265 employees including public health nurses, sanitarians, health educators, technicians, public health administrators, and specialized staff at the Kent County Animal Shelter. The Health Department operates one main clinic and three satellite clinics located in Kentwood, Rockford, and Grand Rapids. To learn more about KCHD services, visit www.accesskent.com/health.

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