

# Volunteer fire department banquet linked to foodborne illness outbreak

At least 50 illnesses traced to  
community event



Community events, such as wedding receptions, church picnics, and fundraisers are common sources of foodborne illness outbreaks. These events are often held at temporary sites and staffed by volunteers.

A Silver Lake Fire Department annual dinner event at the Caitlin Gardens Catering Hall in Slate Hill, New York has been implicated as the source of a foodborne illness outbreak. At least 50 attendees, many of them firefighters, have reported nausea, abdominal cramps, diarrhea, and vomiting the day after attending the event. The Orange County Health Department (NY), the New York

State Department of Health and the Silver Lake Fire Department are continuing to investigate in order to pinpoint a likely pathogen and cause.

Following a post-outbreak investigation, health officials said that there were no significant issues with the facility or observed food handling procedures.

## What you can do:

- **Cook foods to recommended temperatures**
- **Hold hot foods above 135°F and cold foods below 41°F**
- **Use digital tip sensitive thermometers to confirm cooking and holding temperatures**
- **Avoid cross-contamination between raw foods and ready-to-eat foods and the utensils used to prepare those foods.**
- **Practice good personal hygiene and sanitation.**