

Consumer Corner

Make Sure Your Ice Is Safe And Clean

(NAPSA)—You may think that all ice is the same, but if you have contaminated ice, you and your family could be risking your health.

As the weather begins to heat up, so does ice consumption to keep beverages and food cold and fresh. Whether it's a backyard BBQ, a picnic at the park or a daily glass of iced tea, people need safe, clean ice.

Recent news reports have shown that some ice in fast-food restaurants is dirtier than toilet water. Whether processed and packaged from a moldy ice machine, mishandled through the use of dirty buckets or even hand-scooped by dirty hands, it is difficult to know exactly what you're buying and consuming.

Here are a few tips for purchasing clean, safe ice:

- Ice should be clear in color as well as odorless and tasteless.
- The bag should be properly closed and secure.
- The bag should have the manufacturer's name, address and phone number.
- The bag should be free of any foreign objects.
- The bag should have a product code.

According to a recent study conducted by Michigan State University, there is a heightened concern with safety of foods among consumers. In fact, 63 percent of the consumers interviewed are very or fairly concerned about the safety of the foods they eat and almost half of the respondents said they do not buy foods that are likely to be unsafe.



Don't let contaminated ice ruin an otherwise lovely day. Look for the IPIA quality seal to ensure your packaged ice comes from a trusted source.

This summer, the International Packaged Ice Association (IPIA) wants you to know that all ice is not created equal and that ice shoppers need to be selective. When buying packaged ice, look for a product that has been packaged by a certified IPIA member and carries the IPIA seal.

The seal means that the packaged ice consumers are buying meets the association's strict quality and safety policy. The stringent Packaged Ice Quality Control Standards (PIQCS) are mandated for all IPIA members to ensure safe and quality ice. The standards regulate employees' personal hygiene, sanitary operations of the facilities, equipment and utensils used in making ice, quality of the water source and continuous microbiological testing of the finished product.

To learn more about safe ice, visit www.packagedice.com.