

FOOD SAFETY BEFORE, DURING AND AFTER A POWER OUTAGE

Know how to keep food safe before during and after emergencies. Hurricanes, tornadoes, winter weather and other events may cause power outages. Follow these tips to help minimize food loss and reduce your risk of foodborne illness.

BEFORE

PLAN AHEAD (IF YOU CAN) ...



Put appliance thermometers in your refrigerator and freezer.



Freeze containers of water and gel packs to help keep food cold if the power goes out.

Keep freezer **0°F** or below

Refrigerator **40°F** or below

Group foods together in the freezer to help food stay colder longer.

Freeze refrigerated items such as leftovers, milk, and fresh meat and poultry that you do not need immediately.

If you think power will be out for an extended period of time, buy dry or block ice to keep the fridge or freezer cold.



Store nonperishable foods on higher shelves to avoid flood water.

DURING

WHILE THE POWER IS OUT ...



Keep the refrigerator and freezer doors closed to maintain cold temperature.

CLOSED

IF DOORS STAY CLOSED ...

... a full freezer will hold its temperature for **48 HOURS** **24 HOURS** if half-full

... a fridge will keep food safe for **4 HOURS**

AFTER

ONCE THE POWER IS BACK ON ...

WHEN IN DOUBT, THROW IT OUT!



Check the temperature inside of your refrigerator and freezer. If they're still at safe temperatures, your food should be fine.



Never taste food to determine its safety!

WHAT SHOULD I THROW OUT?



REFREEZE FOOD THAT STILL CONTAINS ICE CRYSTALS OR IS AT 40°F OR BELOW.

WHAT CAN I KEEP?

The following foods are safe if held above 40°F for more than 2 hours:



FOLLOW THESE STEPS AFTER A FLOOD:

AFTER A FLOOD

- DO NOT EAT any food that may have touched flood water.
- DISCARD FOOD not in waterproof containers; screw-caps, snap lids, pull tops, and crimped tops are not waterproof.
- DISCARD cardboard juice/milk/baby formula boxes and home canned foods.
- DISCARD any damaged cans that have swelling, leakage, punctures, holes, fractures, extensive deep rusting, or crushing/denting severe enough to prevent normal stacking or opening.



For more food safety tips, go to

FoodSafety.gov

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