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.

Keep **freezer** **0°F** or below

Refrigerator **40°F** or below

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

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

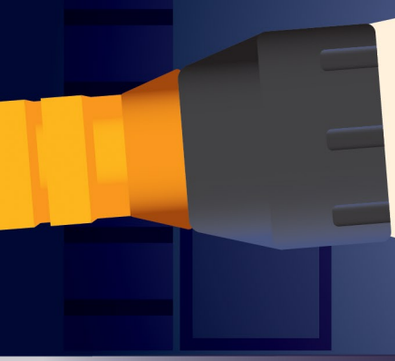
Freeze refrigerated items such as leftovers, milk, and fresh meat and poultry that you do not need immediately.

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.**



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 CAN I KEEP?

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

Hard cheeses (Cheddar, Colby, Swiss, Parmesan, Provolone, Romano)

Grated Parmesan, Romano, or combination (in can or jar)

Butter or margarine

Opened fruit juices

Opened canned fruits

Jelly, relish, taco sauce, mustard, ketchup, olives, pickles

Worcestershire, soy, barbecue, and Hoisin sauces

Peanut butter

Opened vinegar-based dressings

Bread, rolls, cakes, muffins, quick breads, tortillas

Breakfast foods (waffles, pancakes, bagels)

Fruit pies

Fresh mushrooms, herbs, and spices

Uncut raw vegetables and fruit

WHAT SHOULD I THROW OUT?

Meat, poultry or seafood products

Soft cheeses and shredded cheeses

Milk, cream, yogurt, and other dairy products

Opened baby formula

Eggs and egg products

Dough, cooked pasta

Cooked or cut produce

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

AFTER A FLOOD

FOLLOW THESE STEPS 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.

Pots, pans, dishes and utensils

Undamaged all-metal cans after removing labels

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For more food safety tips, go to **—FoodSafety.gov—**

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