



BEFORE LOSING POWER:

- Keep appliance thermometers in both the refrigerator and the freezer to ensure temperatures remain food safe during a power outage. Safe temperatures are 40°F or lower in the refrigerator, 0°F or lower in the freezer.
- Freeze water in one-quart plastic storage bags or small containers prior to a storm. These containers are small enough to fit around the food in the refrigerator and freezer to help keep food cold. Remember, water expands when it freezes so don't overfill the containers.
- Freeze refrigerated items, such as leftovers, milk and fresh meat and poultry that you may not need immediately-this helps keep them at a safe temperature longer.
- Know where you can get dry ice or block ice.
- Have coolers on hand to keep refrigerator food cold if the power will be out for more than four hours.

IF THE POWER GOES OUT:

- Keep the refrigerator and freezer doors closed as much as possible. A refrigerator will keep food cold for about 4 hours if the door is kept closed. A full freezer will hold its temperature for about 48 hours (24 hours if half-full).
- Place meat and poultry to one side of the freezer or on a tray to prevent cross contamination of thawing juices.
- Use dry or block ice to keep the refrigerator as cold as possible during an extended power outage. Fifty pounds of dry ice should keep a fully-stocked 18-cubic-foot freezer cold for two days.

FOOD SAFETY AFTER A FLOOD:

- Do not eat any food that may have come into contact with flood water -- this would include raw fruits and vegetables, cartons of milk or eggs.
- Discard any food that is not in a waterproof container if there is any chance that it has come into contact with flood water. Food containers that are not waterproof include those packaged in plastic wrap or cardboard, or those with screw caps, snap lids, pull tops, and crimped caps. Flood waters can enter into any of these containers and contaminate the food inside. Also, discard cardboard juice/milk/baby formula boxes and home canned foods if they have come in contact with flood water, because they cannot be effectively cleaned and sanitized.
- Inspect canned foods and discard any food in damaged cans. Can damage is shown by swelling, leakage, punctures, holes, fractures, extensive deep rusting, or crushing/denting severe enough to prevent normal stacking or opening with a manual, wheel type can opener.