

TIPS TO KEEP FOOD SAFE DURING POWER OUTAGES



With severe weather, public health officials are urging consumers to practice good food safety during power outages. One important thing to remember is that placing perishable food outside in snow does not provide the proper cooling to keep food safe.

The Food and Drug Administration (FDA) has listed the following food safety measures for those experiencing power outages:

Be Prepared and Plan Ahead

- Have a refrigerator and freezer thermometer, and check it regularly to ensure that the refrigerator temperature is at or below 41 degrees F and the freezer is at or below 0 degrees F.
- Freeze refrigerated items that you may not need immediately, and group foods close together in the freezer.
- Stock your pantry with a few days' worth of ready-to-eat foods (those that can be consumed without cooking), that do not require refrigeration, frozen storage, or special preparation.

If the Power Goes Out

- Cold temperatures slow the growth of harmful bacteria. Keeping food at safe temperatures is key to reduce the risk of foodborne illnesses.
- Keep refrigerator and freezer doors closed as much as possible. The refrigerator will keep food cold for about 4 hours, and a full freezer will keep the temperature for approximately 48 hours (24 hours if half full) if the doors remain closed.
- Use ice (dry or block ice, or ice cubes) and frozen containers of water or gel packs to keep your refrigerator and freezer as cold as possible.

When Power is Restored

- Before eating any food after a power outage, check the temperatures inside your refrigerator and freezer.
- If the power was out for 4 hours or less, refrigerated food should be safe as long as the doors were kept closed. When the power comes back on, check the temperature in the refrigerator or of the food.
- Perishable foods such as meat, poultry, seafood, milk, eggs, or leftovers with temperatures that are 45 degrees F or below, measured with a food thermometer, should be safe but cook and consume them as soon as possible.
- Discard any perishable food that has been at temperatures above 40 degrees F for 4 hours or more.



Learn more about how to keep your food and water safe during a power outage at:

www.fda.gov/food/buy-store-serve-safe-food/food-and-water-safety-during-power-outages-and-floods.



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