

## POWER FAILURE HOW TO PROTECT FOODS

### What is the first thing I should do if the power goes out?

Try to keep the doors closed on your refrigerators and freezers as much as possible. This keeps the cold air inside. A full, closed freezer can stay at freezing temperatures about two days, a half-full freezer about 1 day. If you think the power will be out for several days, try to find some ice to pack inside your refrigerators. Remember to keep your raw foods separate from your ready-to-eat foods.



### What foods should I be concerned about?

- **Potentially hazardous foods are the most important.** These are all meats, fish, poultry, all dairy products, all eggs and egg products, soft cheeses, cooked beans, cooked rice, cooked potatoes, cooked pasta, potato/pasta/macaroni salads, custards, puddings, etc.
- **Some foods may not be hazardous but the quality may be affected.** These foods include salad dressings, mayonnaise, butter and margarine, produce, hard cheese, etc.
- **Some foods are safe.** These are carbonated beverages, unopened bottled juices, ketchup, mustard, relishes, jams, peanut butter, barbecue sauce, etc.

### When do I save and when do I throw out food? When in doubt, throw it out.

- Refrigerated foods should be safe as long as the power is out no more than 6 hours and the doors have been kept closed. Potentially hazardous foods should be discarded if they warm up above 40°F/4°C.
- Frozen foods that are still frozen are no problem.
- Potentially hazardous foods that have thawed but are still cold or have ice crystals on them should be used as soon as possible. Do not refreeze. If potentially hazardous foods are thawed and warmer than 40°F/ 4°C - you should discard them.

### How do I know if the food is unsafe to eat?

You can't rely on appearance or odor. Never taste the food to determine its safety. Some foods may look and smell fine, but if they have been warm too long the food poisoning bacteria may have grown enough to make you sick.

If possible, use a thermometer to check the temperature of the foods. If potentially hazardous foods are more than 40°F/4°C then they are unsafe.

### What happens when the power goes back on?

- Allow time for refrigerators to reach the proper temperatures of less than 40°F/4°C before restocking.
- Start with all fresh potentially hazardous foods.

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**C.A.R.E** **C**ourage-**A**spire-**R**espect-**E**mpathy

Last Updated: February 2015  
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