

Food Safety Tips in the Event of a Power Outage

The **Temperature Danger Zone (TDZ)** is the temperature range at which bacteria grows most quickly. Allowing food to stay in this temperature range, **40°F to 135°F**, for too long can cause dangerous levels of bacteria to grow and can make people sick.

Keeping Food Safe

- Keep the refrigerator and freezer doors closed as much as possible to maintain the cold temperature.
- The refrigerator will keep food safely cold for 4 hours if the is unopened
- A full freezer will hold the temperature for approximately 48 hours (24 hours if it is half full) if the door remains closed

After a Power Outage

- Never taste food to determine its safety
- Evaluate each item separately
- When in doubt, throw it out

Below are some recommendations for best food safety practices in the event of a power outage or when food has been left in the Temperature Danger Zone for over 4 hours.

Frozen Foods		
When to Save and When to Throw It Out		
FOOD	Still contains ice crystals and feels as cold as if refrigerated	Thawed. Held above 40 °F for over 4 hours
MEAT, POULTRY, SEAFOOD Beef, veal, lamb, pork, ground meats	Refreeze	Discard
Poultry and ground poultry	Refreeze	Discard
Fish	Refreeze. However, there will be some texture and flavor loss.	Discard
DAIRY Milk	Refreeze. May lose some texture.	Discard
Eggs (out of shell) and egg products	Refreeze	Discard
Cheese (soft and semi-soft)	Refreeze. May lose some texture.	Discard
Hard cheeses	Refreeze	Refreeze
Shredded cheeses	Refreeze	Discard
FRUITS Frozen fruits	Refreeze. However, there will be some texture and flavor loss.	Discard
Fruit juices	Refreeze	Refreeze. Discard if mold, yeasty smell, or sliminess develops.
VEGETABLES Frozen vegetables	Refreeze. However, there will be some texture and flavor loss.	Discard
Vegetable juices	Refreeze	Discard after held above 40 °F for 4 hours.
BREADS, PASTRIES Breads, rolls, muffins, cakes	Refreeze	Refreeze
OTHER Frozen meal, entree	Refreeze	Discard

Refrigerated Foods

Suggestions for When to Save and When to Throw It Out

FOOD	Held above 40 °F for over 4 hours
MEAT, POULTRY, SEAFOOD Raw or leftover cooked meat, poultry, fish, or seafood; soy meat substitutes	Discard
Thawing meat or poultry	Discard
Lunchmeats, hot dogs, bacon, sausage, dried beef	Discard
CHEESE Soft Cheeses: blue/bleu, Roquefort, Brie, Camembert, cottage, cream, Edam, Monterey Jack, ricotta, mozzarella, Muenster, Neufchatel, queso blanco, queso fresco	Discard
Hard Cheeses: Cheddar, Colby, Swiss, Parmesan, provolone, Romano	Safe
Processed Cheeses	Safe
Shredded Cheeses	Discard
DAIRY Milk, cream, sour cream, buttermilk, evaporated milk, yogurt, soy milk	Discard
EGGS Fresh eggs, egg products	Discard
FRUITS Fruit juices, opened	Safe
Canned fruits, opened	Safe
Fresh fruits, coconut, raisins, dried fruits, candied fruits, dates	Safe
SAUCES, SPREADS, JAMS Peanut butter	Safe
BREAD, CAKES, COOKIES,PASTA, GRAINS Bread, rolls, cakes, muffins, quick breads, tortillas	Safe
VEGETABLES Fresh mushrooms, herbs, spices	Safe
Greens, pre-cut, pre-washed, packaged	Discard
Vegetables, raw	Safe
Vegetables, cooked; tofu	Discard