

# REFRIGERATED FOODS (When to Save and When to Throw Out)

FOOD	Held above 40°F for over 2 hours
<b>MEAT, POULTRY, SEAFOOD</b>	
Raw or leftover cooked meat, poultry, fish, or seafood; soy meat substitutes	Discard
Thawing meat or poultry	Discard
Meat, tuna, shrimp, chicken, or egg salad	Discard
Leftovers	Discard
Lunchmeats, hot dogs, bacon, sausage, dried beef	Discard
Canned hams labeled "Keep Refrigerated," canned meats & fish	Discard
<b>CHEESE</b>	
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
Low-fat cheeses	Discard
Grated Parmesan, Romano, or combination (in can or jar)	Safe
<b>DAIRY</b>	
Milk, cream, sour cream, buttermilk, evaporated milk, yogurt, eggnog, soy milk	Discard
Butter, margarine	Safe
Baby formula, opened	Discard
<b>EGGS</b>	
Fresh eggs, hard-cooked in shell, egg dishes, egg products	Discard
Custards and puddings	Discard
<b>CASSEROLES, SOUPS, STEWS</b>	
Discard	
<b>FRUITS</b>	
Fresh fruits, cut	Discard
Fruit juices, opened	Safe
Canned fruits, opened	Safe
Fresh fruits, coconut, raisins, dried fruits, candied fruits, dates	Safe
<b>SAUCES, SPREADS, JAMS</b>	
Opened mayonnaise, tartar sauce, horseradish	Discard if above 50°F for over 8 hrs.
Peanut butter	Safe
Jelly, relish, taco sauce, mustard, catsup, olives, pickles, ketchup	Safe
Worcestershire, soy, barbecue, Hoisin sauces	Safe
Fish sauces (oyster sauce)	Discard
Opened vinegar-based dressings	Safe
Opened creamy-based dressings	Discard
Spaghetti sauce, opened jar	Discard
<b>BREAD, CAKES, COOKIES, PASTA, GRAINS</b>	
Bread, rolls, cakes, muffins, quick breads, tortillas	Safe
Refrigerator biscuits, rolls, cookie dough	Discard
Cooked pasta, rice, potatoes	Discard
Pasta salads with mayonnaise or vinaigrette	Discard
Fresh pasta	Discard

FOOD	Held above 40°F for over 2 hours
<b>BREAD, CAKES, COOKIES, PASTA, GRAINS</b>	
Cheesecake	Discard
Breakfast foods – waffles, pancakes, bagels	Safe
<b>PIES, PASTRIES</b>	
Pastries, cream filled	Discard
Pies – custard, cheese filled or chiffon; quiche	Discard
Pies – fruit	Safe
<b>VEGETABLES</b>	
Fresh mushrooms, herbs, spices	Safe
Greens, pre-cut, pre-washed, packaged	Discard
Vegetables, raw	Safe
Vegetables, cooked; tofu	Discard
Vegetable juice, opened	Discard
Baked potatoes	Discard
Potato salad	Discard

**DO YOU HAVE FOOD SAFETY QUESTIONS?**

**ASK USDA!**  
 The FSIS automated response system can provide food safety information 24/7. Visit us at [www.fsis.usda.gov](http://www.fsis.usda.gov).

**USDA Meat and Poultry HOTLINE**  
 1-888-MPHotline (1-888-674-6854)  
 English & Spanish  
 10 a.m. - 6 p.m. ET  
[FoodSafety.gov/Keep/Emergency](http://FoodSafety.gov/Keep/Emergency)

For more information on Food Safety for Areas Affected by Severe Storms or Hurricanes Contact the USDA Food Safety and Inspection Service. Information is available in English and Spanish.

**Phone:** USDA Meat and Poultry Hotline 1-888-MPHOTLINE (1-888-674-6854) / **Email:** [mph hotline@usda.gov](mailto:mph hotline@usda.gov)  
**Chat:** To chat with a live food safety representative, Monday through Friday from 10 a.m. - 6 p.m. ET, visit [Ask.USDA.gov](http://Ask.USDA.gov)  
**Online:** Receive automated food safety information 24/7 by visiting [Foodsafety.gov](http://Foodsafety.gov); [www.fsis.usda.gov](http://www.fsis.usda.gov); and [Ask.USDA.gov](http://Ask.USDA.gov)



[www.fsis.usda.gov/apps](http://www.fsis.usda.gov/apps)  
 Download the Foodkeeper app for on-the-go access to food storage information at [www.fsis.usda.gov/apps](http://www.fsis.usda.gov/apps). It has information on 500+ food and beverage items.

## A Consumer's Guide to Food Safety

## SEVERE STORMS HURRICANES POWER OUTAGES

Food Safety and Inspection Service

# Food Safety During an Emergency

Did you know that a flood, fire, natural disaster or the loss of power from high winds, snow or ice could jeopardize the safety of your food? Knowing how to determine if food is safe and how to keep food safe will help minimize the potential loss of food and reduce the risk of foodborne illness. This guide will help you make the right decisions for keeping your family safe during an emergency.

## Power Outages

*We practice basic safe food handling in our daily lives, but obtaining and storing food safely becomes more challenging during a power outage or natural disasters such as hurricanes and floods.*

### STEPS TO FOLLOW TO PREPARE FOR A POSSIBLE WEATHER EMERGENCY

Keep an appliance thermometer in the refrigerator and freezer. An appliance thermometer will indicate the temperature in the refrigerator and freezer in case of a power outage and help determine the safety of the food.

- Make sure the freezer is at 0°F or below and the refrigerator is at 40°F or below.
- Freeze containers of water for ice to help keep food cold in the freezer, refrigerator, or coolers after the power is out.
- 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.

- Plan ahead and know where dry ice and block ice can be purchased.
- Store food on shelves that will be safely out of the way of contaminated water in case of flooding.
- Have coolers on hand to keep refrigerated food cold if the power will be out for more than 4 hours. Plan ahead and purchase or make ice cubes and store in the freezer for use in the refrigerator or in a cooler. Freeze gel packs ahead of time for use in coolers.
- Group foods together in the freezer—this helps the food stay cold longer.

### STEPS TO FOLLOW DURING AND AFTER THE WEATHER EMERGENCY

- Never taste a food to determine its safety!
- Keep the refrigerator and freezer doors closed as much as possible to maintain the cold temperature.
- The refrigerator will keep food safely cold for about 4 hours if it is unopened. A full freezer will hold the temperature for approximately 48 hours (24 hours if it is half full and the door remains closed).



- Food may be safely refrozen if it still contains ice crystals or is at 40°F or below.
- Obtain block ice or dry ice to keep your refrigerator and freezer as cold as possible if the power is going to be out for a prolonged period of time. Fifty pounds of dry ice should hold an 18-cubic-foot full freezer for 2 days.
- If the power has been out for several days, then check the temperature of the freezer with an appliance thermometer or food thermometer. If the food still contains ice crystals or is at 40°F or below, the food is safe.

- If a thermometer has not been kept in the freezer, then check each package of food to determine its safety. If the food still contains ice crystals, the food is safe.
- Discard refrigerated perishable food such as meat, poultry, fish, soft cheeses, milk, eggs, leftovers, and deli items after 4 hours without power.
- **When in Doubt, Throw it Out!**

## Safety of Food in Containers Exposed to Flood Waters

### HOW TO DETERMINE WHAT FOOD TO KEEP OR DISCARD

- Do not eat any food that may have come into contact with flood water.
- Inspect canned foods and discard any food in damaged cans.

### POTS, PANS, DISHES AND UTENSILS:

- Thoroughly wash metal pans, ceramic dishes, and utensils (including can

openers) and counter tops with soap and water, using hot water if available. Rinse and then sanitize them by boiling in clean water or immersing them for 15 minutes in a solution of 1 tablespoon of unscented, liquid chlorine bleach per gallon of drinking water (or the cleanest, clearest water available).

### SAFETY OF DRINKING WATER IF FLOODING OCCURS

- Use bottled water that has not been exposed to flood waters if it is available.
- If you don't have bottled water, you should boil water to make it safe. Boiling water will kill most types of disease-causing organisms that may be present.
- If you can't boil water, you can disinfect it using household bleach. Bleach will kill some, but not all, types of disease-causing organisms that may be in the water. Add 1/8 teaspoon (or 8 drops) of regular, unscented, liquid household bleach for each gallon of water. Let it stand for 30 minutes.
- If you have a well that has been flooded, the water should be tested and disinfected after flood waters recede.

## 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.

