

# KEEPING YOUR FOOD SAFE

## *If the Power Goes Out*

**When  
in doubt –  
THROW IT  
OUT!**

Some foods may be a higher risk for causing food borne illness if the temperature of the food has risen above 40°F for more than 2 hours. The foods may look or smell fine but may not be safe to eat. Use a food thermometer to check the temperature of the food. If you are not sure if the food is safe to eat, don't taste it. Throw it out! Bacteria (germs) are everywhere. Most of them are not harmful. However, under the right conditions, some germs in food can grow to harmful levels and make people sick. To keep your food safe when the power goes out, follow these steps on the next page.

- If the power goes out**
- **FIRST:** Use perishable foods and foods from the refrigerator
  - **SECOND:** Use the foods from the freezer
  - **THIRD:** Use canned foods and shelf-stable foods



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### **THROW OUT THESE FOODS if the temperature of the food has risen above 40°F for more than 2 hours.**

<b>MEAT, POULTRY, SEAFOOD, EGGS &amp; EGG PRODUCTS</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Fresh, leftover or thawing meat, poultry, fish, seafood</li> <li>• Salads made with meat, tuna, shrimp, chicken or eggs</li> <li>• Lunch meats, hot dogs, bacon, sausage, dried beef</li> <li>• Canned hams labeled "Keep Refrigerated"</li> <li>• Opened canned meats and beans</li> <li>• Gravy, stuffing</li> </ul>	
<b>BREAD, PASTA &amp; RICE</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Refrigerator biscuits, rolls</li> <li>• Cooked pasta, spaghetti or rice</li> <li>• Pasta salads with mayonnaise or vinaigrette</li> <li>• Fresh pasta</li> </ul>	
<b>MIXED FOODS</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Soups and stews</li> <li>• Casseroles</li> <li>• Pizza – with any topping</li> </ul>	
<b>SAUCES, SPREADS &amp; CONDIMENTS</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Opened spaghetti sauce</li> <li>• Opened tartar sauce, horseradish</li> <li>• Opened olives</li> <li>• White wine Worcestershire sauce</li> <li>• Fish sauces (oyster sauce), Hoisin sauce</li> </ul>	
<b>MILK &amp; MILK PRODUCTS</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Opened milk, buttermilk, evaporated milk</li> <li>• Yogurt</li> <li>• Cream, sour cream</li> <li>• Cheeses, shredded or whole</li> <li>• Opened or reconstituted baby formula</li> </ul>	
<b>VEGETABLES</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Cooked vegetables</li> <li>• Pre-cut packaged greens</li> <li>• Opened vegetable juice</li> <li>• Baked potatoes</li> <li>• Potato salad</li> </ul>	
<b>FRUITS</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Cut fruit</li> <li>• Opened canned fruit or juice</li> <li>• Opened canned fruit or juice</li> </ul>	
<b>SNACKS AND SWEETS</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Cream filled pastries</li> <li>• Pies (custard, cheese filled, or chiffon)</li> <li>• Cheesecake</li> <li>• Refrigerator cookie dough</li> </ul>	
<b>FATS</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Commercial garlic in oil</li> <li>• Opened mayonnaise and salad dressings</li> <li>• Whipped butter</li> <li>• Opened olives</li> </ul>	

**KEEP IT CLEAN**

Germs can spread from people to food and food contact surfaces and utensils.

- Wash your hands with soapy water before you touch food. If you don't have water use a moist towelette or alcohol-based sanitizer.
- Clean food utensils and equipment with sudsy warm water and rinse. If you don't have water use disposable plates and utensils.
- Don't eat unwashed fruits or vegetables.

**SEPARATE FOODS**

Germs can spread from one food to another.

- Wrap uncooked meats like poultry, red meat and seafood separately.
- If you use an insulated cooler to store foods, keep uncooked meat below other foods or use a separate cooler for meats.
- Throw out any cooked foods that have come in contact with raw meat juices.

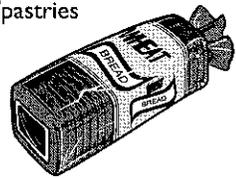
**KEEP HOT FOOD HOT**

Heat can kill germs.

- Use your grill, gas, wood or camp stove to cook food outdoors.
- Cans may serve as cooking and serving dishes. Open the can and remove the label before heating.
- Don't leave cooked or opened canned Food at room temperature longer than 2 hours.

**IT'S SAFE TO KEEP... (These foods keep well when stored in a dry, cool place.)**

Once opened, or when water is added, these foods can become risky. Throw out leftovers or opened containers.

<b>UNOPENED CANNED FOODS</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Fish, poultry, beans &amp; meat mixtures like chili, stews, soups, chow mein</li> <li>• Evaporated milk or canned pudding</li> <li>• Vegetables, fruits and juices</li> <li>• Spaghetti sauce</li> <li>• Grated Parmesan or Romano cheese</li> <li>• Peanut butter</li> </ul>	
<b>UNOPENED PACKAGES OF INSTANT FOODS</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Soup mixes</li> <li>• Potatoes</li> <li>• Dried vegetables</li> <li>• Cereals (oatmeal, cream of wheat)</li> <li>• Rice or noodles</li> <li>• Refried beans</li> <li>• Dry milk</li> </ul>	
<b>WRAPPED PACKAGES OF...</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Bread, rolls, bagels, muffins, quick breads</li> <li>• Ready-to-eat cereals or breakfast bars/pastries</li> <li>• Crackers, hard taco shells</li> <li>• Popcorn or rice cakes</li> <li>• Uncooked rice or pasta</li> <li>• Dried fruits</li> <li>• Cakes and fruit pies</li> </ul>	
<b>UNOPENED</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Baby formula</li> <li>• Boxed shelf-stable milk, rice or soy milk</li> </ul>	
<b>UNOPENED CONDIMENTS</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Taco, barbecue and soy sauce</li> <li>• Jellies and jams</li> <li>• Relishes, mustard, catsup, herbs, spices</li> </ul>	
<b>FATS</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Margarine (100% vegetable oil)</li> <li>• Vegetable oils</li> </ul>	

**KEEP COLD FOODS COLD**

Cold temperatures (40° F or below) can slow the growth of bacteria. Be sure the food in your refrigerator and freezer stays cold.

- In your refrigerator, put a food thermometer in a glass of water and check the temperature of the thermometer every 2 hours. If the temperature of the thermometer rises above 40°F for more than 2 hours, check the "When in Doubt-Throw it Out" chart and throw out the refrigerated food.

- In your freezer: You can safely refreeze thawed foods that contain ice crystals or are cold to the touch (40°F or less). If the temperature of the food has risen above 40°F for more than 2 hours, check the When in Doubt-Throw it Out chart and throw out the food.
- Do not put perishable foods outside. The sun may cause some frozen foods to melt and refrigerated foods to get too warm. If these foods are not stored in tight containers, they are exposed to animals and other unsanitary conditions.



A member of the Massachusetts Partnership for Food Safety Education. For more information on preparing for an emergency contact MEMA <http://www.manet.state.ma.us/mema/> For answers to food safety questions call the USDA Meat & Poultry Hotline ▪ 1-800-535-4555 Prepared by the UMass Extension Nutrition Education Program in cooperation with the Massachusetts Partnership for Safety Education Sources: Colorado State University Cooperative Extension, University of Maine Cooperative Extension and North Carolina State University Cooperative Extension