

# Food Safety During Power Outages

## Additional Resources and Information

- [American Red Cross Food Safety in a Power Outage Page](#)
- [USDA Alert: Keeping Food Safe During Flooding and Power Outages](#)
- [Hand Hygiene in Emergency Situations](#)
- [Keeping Food Safe in an Emergency, U.S. Department of Agriculture](#)
- [Consumer Advice: Disaster Assistance with Food](#)
- [Food Safety Information for Hurricane Aftermath, FDA](#)

The Englewood Health Department is advising anyone who loses power to take precautions to avoid eating food that may be unsafe. Even if food does not smell bad, and even if it looks safe, it may have been out of a safe temperature range long enough to have become contaminated with dangerous bacteria.

**The Englewood Health Department recommends these food safety tips:**

### **About food in a freezer:**

- Without power, a full upright or chest freezer will keep everything frozen for about two days. A half-full freezer will keep food frozen for about one day.
- If power will be coming back on fairly soon, you can make the food last longer by keeping the door shut as much as possible.
- If power will be off for an extended period, if possible, take food to friends' freezers.

### **About food in a refrigerator/freezer:**

- Without power, the refrigerator section will keep food cool for 4-6 hours depending on the kitchen temperature.
- A full, well-functioning freezer unit should keep food frozen for two days. A half-full freezer unit should keep things frozen for about one day.
- Discard perishable foods like eggs, meat, fish, or milk that has been above 41 degrees for more than four to six hours.

### **About thawed food:**

- Food still containing ice crystals or that feels refrigerator-cold can be refrozen.
- Discard any thawed food that has risen to room temperature and remained there for two hours or more.
- Immediately discard any food with a strange color or odor.
- Finally, the best advice is "if in doubt, throw it out."
- If anyone has a concern about food they have eaten in a restaurant that lost power, please call the Englewood Health Department at 1-201-871-6510/6514/6517.

For more information, please contact the Englewood Health Department.