



US Army Reserve Safety Awareness



Food Safety During Emergencies Before, During and After Emergencies

PLAN AHEAD

- Make sure the refrigerator temperature is at 40 °F or below and the freezer is at 0 °F or below.
- Group foods together in both the refrigerator and freezer. This helps foods stay cold longer.
- Keep the freezer full. Fill empty spaces with frozen plastic jugs of water, bags of ice, or gel packs.
- Freeze refrigerated items that you may not need immediately. This will keep them at a safe temperature longer.
- Perishable foods will stay safe in a refrigerator only 4 hours.
- Find out where dry ice and block ice can be purchased.

DURING A POWER OUTAGE

- Keep refrigerator and freezer doors closed.
- The refrigerator will keep food safe for up to 4 hours.
- A freezer will hold the temperature for approximately 48 hours (24 hours if it is half full).
- In freezers, food in the front, in the door, or in small, thin packages will defrost faster than large, thick items or food in the back or bottom of the unit.
- During a snowstorm, do not place perishable food out in the snow. Outside temperatures can vary and food can be exposed to unsanitary conditions and animals.

AFTER A POWER OUTAGE

- **Never** taste food to determine its safety. **When In Doubt, Throw It Out!**

UNSAFE FOODS (Refrigerated)

- Discard refrigerated food that has been without power for more than 4 hours.
- Discard any that may have become contaminated by juices dripping from raw meat, poultry, or fish.
- If any food has an unusual odor, color, or texture, **throw it out.**

SAFE-TO-EAT (Frozen Foods)

- Frozen foods that have thawed, but still contain ice crystals.
- Foods that have remained at refrigerator temperatures — 40 °F or below.
- Foods that don't actually need to be frozen.