



Food Safety and Power Outages

USDA: [Keeping Food Safe During an Emergency](http://www.foodsafety.gov)
www.foodsafety.gov



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A refrigerator will keep food safe for about four hours if it is unopened. A full freezer will keep food at a safe temperature for about 48 hours.

- ✓ Freeze containers of water ahead of time for ice to keep food cold in the freezer, the refrigerator, or coolers after the power goes out.
- ✓ Group food together in the freezer to help the food stay colder for a longer period. Water-tight zip lock bags filled 3/4 full can be placed around the grouped frozen food to provide extra cooling.
- ✓ Keep frozen gel packs on hand for use in coolers.
- ✓ Keep the refrigerator and freezer doors closed as much as possible to maintain the cold temperature of the food.
- ✓ Never taste a food to determine if it is safe to eat. The presence of harmful bacteria in food cannot always be determined by the way the food tastes. If in doubt, throw it out.

Frozen foods that are safe and may be refrozen after being thawed and stored above 40°F for more than two hours:

- Hard cheeses
- Fruit juices (discard if mold, yeasty smell or sliminess develops)
- Fruit, home or commercially packed (discard if mold, yeasty smell or sliminess develops)
- Ready-to-eat breads, rolls, muffins, cakes (without custard fillings)
- Flour, cornmeal, nuts
- Breakfast items: waffles, pancakes, bagels

Refrigerated items that are still safe after being stored above 40°F for more than two hours:

- Hard cheeses
- Grated Parmesan, Romano, or combination (in can or jar)
- Peanut butter, jelly; mustard, catsup, soy sauce, barbeque sauce, Worcestershire
- Olives, pickles
- Ready-to-eat bread, rolls, cakes, muffins (without custard fillings); tortillas
- Fruit juices, opened; canned fruits, opened
- Fresh fruits (uncut), coconut, raisins, dried fruits, candied fruits, dates
- Vegetables, raw; fresh mushrooms, herbs, spices