

## FOOD SAFETY AT HOME DURING POWER OUTAGES

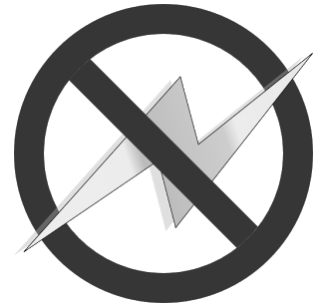
### Be prepared for a power outage:

- Keep a thermometer in refrigerator to ensure the temperature is 41°F or below.
- Make sure freezer keeps food solidly frozen.
- Freeze containers of water for use in the refrigerator or freezer to help keep food cold during an outage.
- In freezer (and refrigerator) store uncooked meat, poultry and seafood below (or separate from) other foods to prevent their juices from dripping onto other foods as they thaw.
- Keep a supply of canned and pre-packaged food and bottled water available for prolonged outages. Water will be needed for consumption, dishwashing, and hand washing - approximately one gallon per person per day.



### When the power goes out:

- Keep refrigerator and freezer closed to maintain temperature inside. Food may stay cold in a refrigerator up to 4-6 hours and frozen 1-2 days in a freezer.
- Do not eat refrigerated foods that have been at temperatures over 41°F for more than 4 hours.
- If you plan to eat refrigerated or frozen meat, poultry, fish, or eggs, ensure they are fully cooked.  
Fish/Eggs/Pork/Beef: 145°F • Ground beef: 155°F • Poultry: 165°F



### Tips for cooking during a power outage:

After a storm has knocked out electricity or gas lines, cooking meals can be a problem and may be dangerous. Follow these safety tips if you need to cook during a power outage.

- **NEVER USE A CHARCOAL GRILL, GAS GRILL OR CAMP STOVE INDOORS.** Using these indoors puts you and your family at risk for asphyxiation from carbon monoxide and/or starting a fire that could destroy your home.
- Small electrical appliances can be used to prepare meals if you have access to an electrical generator. **NEVER USE A GENERATOR INDOORS.**
- If you want to cook in a fireplace, make sure the chimney is sound. Don't start a fire in a fireplace that has a broken chimney. Be sure the damper is open.
- If you build a fire outside, make sure it is well-contained and far from any buildings.
- Never use gasoline to get a wood or charcoal fire started.
- Be sure the fire is completely extinguished when you are done with it.
- Ensure that foods are cooked to the following temperatures:  
Ground beef: 155°F ~ Poultry: 165°F ~ Fish: 145°F ~ Eggs: 145°F
- When cooking is not possible, many canned foods can be eaten cold.

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## After the power comes back on:

You cannot rely on the appearance or odor to determine if food will make someone sick.

- Determine if the food inside the refrigerator is safe by checking food temperatures. Food that is 41°F or below is safe to use.
- Throw out any food that has been at temperatures over 41°F for more than 4 hours.
- Food may be safely refrozen if it still contains ice crystals or is at 41°F or below.



### **REMEMBER - WHEN IN DOUBT- THROW IT OUT!**

*Foodborne illnesses can cause vomiting, diarrhea, doctor's visits and lost work days. When bacteria grow on food, it can produce toxins or multiply to levels that cannot be made safe by cooking.*

### **For more information:**

For more information on food safety, please contact Sacramento County Environmental Management Department at (916) 875-8440 or visit the EMD website at [emd.saccounty.gov](http://emd.saccounty.gov)