FOOD SAFETY

After A Fire or Power Outage

Know the proper food safety precautions to take during and after a power outage.
Below are some action steps to take for food in your refrigerator and freezer.

During a power outage

- ☐ Keep the refrigerator door closed as much as possible.
- ☐ Buy dry or block ice to keep the refrigerator as cold as possible if power will be out for a prolonged period of time. Fifty pounds of dry ice should keep an 18 cubic foot, fully stocked freezer cold for two days.
- ☐ The food in your refrigerator will keep safe for up to 4 hours during a power outage. A full freezer will hold a safe temperature for approximately 48 hours (24 hours if it is half-full and the door remains closed).

After a power outage

After a power outage, never taste food to determine its safety. You will have to evaluate each item separately – use the chart on the reverse side as a general guide. **When in doubt, throw it out!**

- ☐ Refrigerated food should be safe as long as the power was out for no more than 4 hours and the refrigerator door was kept shut. Discard any perishable food (such as meat, poultry, fish, eggs or leftovers) that has been at temperatures above 40° F for 2 hours or more (or 1 hour if temperatures are above 90º F).
- ☐ If an appliance thermometer was kept in the freezer, check the temperature when the power comes back on. If the freezer thermometer reads 40° F or below, the food is safe and may be refrozen.
- ☐ Food may be safely refrozen if it still contains ice crystals or is at 40°F or below, however, its quality may suffer.
- ☐ Perishable food such as meat, poultry, seafood, milk and eggs that are not kept adequately refrigerated or frozen may cause illness if consumed, even when they are thoroughly cooked.

Refrigerated Food and Power Outages
When to Save It and When to Throw It Out

For food held above 40°F for more than 2 hours: ✕ = discard ✓ = keep

MEAT, POULTRY, SEAFOOD

Raw or leftover cooked meat, poultry, fish or seafood; soy meat substitutes	✕
Thawing meat or poultry	✕
Salads: Meat, tuna, shrimp, chicken or egg salad	✕
Gravy, stuffing, broth	✕
Lunchmeats, hot dogs, bacon, sausage, dried beef	✕
Pizza with any topping	✕
Canned hams labeled "Keep Refrigerated"	✕
Canned meats and fish, opened	✕
Casseroles, soups, stews	✕

SAUCES, SPREADS, JAMS

Opened mayonnaise, tartar sauce, horseradish (if above 50°F for more than 8 hrs)	✕
Peanut butter	✓
Jelly, relish, taco sauce, mustard, ketchup, olives, pickles	✓
Worcestershire, soy, barbecue, hoisin sauces	✓
Fish sauces, oyster sauce	✕
Opened vinegar-based dressings	✓
Opened creamy-based dressings	✕
Spaghetti sauce, opened	✕

PIES AND PASTRY

Cream filled pastries	✕
Pies: custard, cheese-filled, or chiffon; quiche	✕
Fruit pies	✓

CHEESE

Soft cheeses: blue/bleu, Roquefort, Brie, Camembert, cottage, cream, Edam, Monterey Jack, ricotta, mozzarella, Muenster, Neufchatel, queso blanco, queso fresco	✕
Hard cheeses: Cheddar, Colby, Swiss, Parmesan, provolone, Romano	✓
Processed cheeses	✓
Shredded cheeses	✕
Low-fat cheeses	✕
Grated Parmesan, Romano, or combination (in can or jar)	✓

DAIRY

Milk, cream, sour cream, buttermilk, evaporated milk, yogurt, eggnog, soy milk	✕
Butter, margarine	✓
Baby formula, opened	✕

BREAD, CAKES, COOKIES, PASTA, GRAINS

Bread, rolls, cakes, muffins, quick breads, tortillas	✓
Refrigerator biscuits, rolls, cookie dough	✕
Cooked pasta, rice, potatoes	✕
Pasta salads with mayonnaise or vinaigrette	✕
Fresh pasta	✕
Cheesecake	✕
Breakfast foods: waffles, pancakes, bagels	✓

EGGS

Fresh eggs, hard cooked in shell, egg dishes, egg products	✕
Custards and puddings, quiche	✕

FRUITS

Fresh fruits, cut	✕
Fresh fruits, uncut	✓
Fruit juices, opened	✓
Canned fruits, opened	✓
Dried fruits, raisins, candied fruits, dates	✓
Sliced or shredded coconut	✕

VEGETABLES

Fresh vegetables, cut	✕
Fresh vegetables, uncut	✓
Fresh mushrooms, herbs, spices	✓
Greens, pre-cut, pre-washed, packaged	✕
Vegetables, cooked	✕
Tofu, cooked	✕
Vegetable juice, opened	✕
Baked potatoes	✕
Commercial garlic in oil	✕
Potato salad	✕
Casseroles, soups, stews	✕