

Food Safety in Power Outages

This guide outlines steps to handle and preserve food safely during power outages. It aims to prevent foodborne illness by maintaining proper food temperature and hygiene when there's a lack of electricity for refrigeration.

Step 1: **Preparation**

Gather coolers, ice packs, or blocks of ice to use in preserving perishable food during the outage. Ensure that you have a digital quick-response thermometer to check the temperature of your food.

Step 2: **Appliance Check**

Do not open refrigerator or freezer doors unless necessary. This helps maintain the cold temperature. The refrigerator will keep food cold for about 4 hours if it is unopened. A full freezer will keep the temperature for approximately 48 hours (24 hours if it is half full) if the door remains closed.

Step 3: **Temperature Monitoring**

Regularly check the temperature inside your refrigerator and freezer. Keep the fridge temperature at or below 40°F (4°C), and the freezer at or below 0°F (-18°C).

Step 4: **Cooler Usage**

Transfer perishable food to coolers filled with ice if the power outage is prolonged or if the temperature inside the fridge rises above 40°F for more than 2 hours.

Step 5: **Food Assessment**

Discard any perishable food that has been at a temperature above 40°F for 2 hours or more, and any food with an unusual odor, color, or texture.

Step 6: **Restock Ice**

As the outage continues, monitor ice levels and replenish as needed to maintain a cold environment for the food.

Step 7: **Sanitation**

Keep food in watertight containers to prevent contact with water as ice melts. Practice good hygiene by washing hands with hand sanitizer or soap and water before handling food to prevent contamination.

Step 8: **Power Return**

When power returns, check the temperature inside the fridge and freezer. If perishable foods (like meat, poultry, seafood, milk, eggs, or leftovers) have been held at 40°F or above for two hours or more, discard them.

Step 9: **Replenishing**

After the outage, restock your emergency supplies of ice, coolers, and frozen gel packs to be prepared for future power outages.

General Notes

Emergency Kit

Maintain an emergency kit with shelf-stable foods, bottled water, manual can openers, and cooking devices that do not require electricity.

Food Records

Keep an updated content list of what is in your refrigerator and freezer to help you quickly decide which items to use first or discard after an outage.

Powered by: **PlaybookWriter.com**