

KNOW THE FACTS!

FOOD SAFETY DURING POWER OUTAGES

When power goes out, especially for long periods of time, it's important to know when and how to use perishable foods. The best way to know if food is safe to keep or cook is to use a food thermometer to determine temperature of foods.

For more information, call the Environmental Health Division at 513.946.7832.

Food in the freezer

- Keep the door closed. Opening the door lets warm air in and allows food to thaw quicker.
- If food reaches temperatures above 32° F, there is a 4 hour window to use the food. Cook it and eat it immediately, or throw it out. Do NOT refreeze it.
- Any food completely thawed and not cooked should NOT be refrozen. Throw it away.
- Frozen food can last up to two days if freezer is full; it can last up to a day when freezer is half full.

Food in the refrigerator

- Keep the door closed. Opening the door lets warm air in and allows food to thaw quicker.
- If food reaches temperatures above 45° F, throw it out. Do not freeze it or re-refrigerate after power is restored.
- Throw out all ground meat. As a processed food, it can allow bacteria to grow much faster than whole meats.

If you don't own a thermometer, the best method for keeping foods cold is to keep the freezer(s) and refrigerator door closed at all times. To be safe, if you can't determine the temperature of perishable foods, throw out all completely thawed food to prevent food-borne illness. Once power returns, go to the local hardware or grocery store and buy a thermometer.

Tip

Check your homeowner's insurance to see if lost food costs are covered in your policy. You may need to inventory discarded items.



**HAMILTON COUNTY
PUBLIC HEALTH**

PREVENT. PROMOTE. PROTECT.

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