

Power Failure/Food Safety

Heavy rain can mean a disruption in electrical and gas service and the availability of potable water.

When power goes off in the refrigerator, you can normally expect food inside to stay safely cold for 4 to 6 hours, depending on how warm your kitchen is.

Here are some additional guidelines:

- Add a block of ice to the refrigerator if the electricity is off longer than 4-6 hours. As this ice melts, the water may saturate food packages. Keep packages out of the water as it drains.
- High protein foods (dairy products, meat, fish, and poultry) should be consumed as soon as possible if power is not restored immediately. They cannot be stored safely at room temperature.
- Fruits and vegetables can be kept safely at room temperature until there are obvious signs of spoilage.
- A fully stocked freezer will keep food frozen 2 days if the door remains closed. A half-full freezer can keep foods frozen about one day.
- If you are purchasing perishable foods from a market in an area that has been affected by power outages, make sure that the cold foods have been kept below 41°F, and that hot foods have been kept above 140°F.
- Do not eat any food that has come in contact with flood water.