



Food Safety Fact Kit

Emergency Food Safety Tips

NSF International is an independent, not-for-profit public health organization that writes public health standards for food, water and consumer products. NSF also tests and certifies products to make sure they meet these standards. NSF has a 65-year history of protecting public health, safety and environment worldwide and is a World Health Organization Collaborating Centre for Food and Water Safety and Indoor Environment. NSF helps consumers avoid foodborne illness by providing food safety tips.

Knowing how to keep food safe during an emergency, as well as how to determine if food is still safe to consume, will help reduce both the risk for foodborne illness as well as loss of food.

Determining if food in the refrigerator or freezer is still safe

When the power is out, keep refrigerator and freezer doors closed as much as possible. Perishable foods such as meats, milk and eggs need to be refrigerated below 41° F. Frozen foods need to be kept below 0° F. The average refrigerator can usually keep food safely cold for about 4 hours if left unopened. A freezer may keep food safe for 24 - 48 hours depending upon its fullness. Keep a thermometer in the refrigerator or freezer to verify the temperature has not exceeded these temperatures.

Discard any foods that have been above 40° F for 2 hours (or 1 hour on 90+ degree days).

Refreezing food

Food can usually be refrozen if it still contains ice crystals or if the internal temperature is 40° F or below. Discard any items in the freezer or refrigerator that have come into contact with raw meat juices.

Foods to keep on hand for emergencies

Keep foods on hand that don't require refrigeration and that can be eaten cold or heated on an outdoor grill or portable stove. Also keep a 3-day supply of bottled water as well as ready-to-use baby formula or extra pet food as needed.

Storing food safely in an emergency

If you live in an area that could be affected by a flood, store food on shelves that will be safely out of the way of contaminated water. Use coolers to help keep food cold if the power goes out more than four hours. Stack items close together to help food stay cold longer.

Cleaning up after a flood

Discard all food that came in contact with flood waters. Discard wooden cutting boards as there is no way to safely clean and sanitize them. Thoroughly wash metal pans, ceramic dishes, and utensils with hot soapy water and sanitize by boiling them in clean water or by immersing them for 15 minutes in a solution of 1 teaspoon of chlorine bleach per quart of water.

For additional information, please visit www.nsf.org/consumer/food_safety.



It isn't always possible to tell if food is safe by sight or smell alone.

NSF International

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