



Plumas County Environmental Health

270 County Hospital Road, Ste. 127, Quincy CA 95971

Phone: (530) 283-6355 ~ Fax: (530) 283-6241

MAINTAINING FOOD SAFETY DURING POWER OUTAGES

IS MY FOOD SAFE?

Before the power goes out:

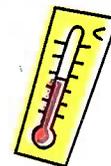
- Obtain thermometers for freezers and refrigerator units and a probe thermometer for food.

When the power goes out:

- Keep refrigerator and freezer doors closed as much as possible to 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.
- Buy block ice to keep refrigerators as cold as possible if the power is going to be out for a prolonged period of time.

Once the power is restored:

- **NEVER** taste food to determine if it is safe to eat.
- The most reliable way to determine the safety of your food is with a thermometer.
- Perishable foods 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.



Freezers

- If the freezer thermometer reads 41°F or below, the food is safe and may be refrozen.
- If a thermometer has not been kept in the freezer, check each package of food to determine if it is safe. If the food still contains ice crystals or a probe thermometer shows 41°F or below, it is safe to refreeze or cook.

Refrigerators

- Refrigerated food should be safe as long as the power was out for no more than 4 hours and the door was kept closed as much as possible.
- Discard any perishable food (such as meat, poultry, fish, eggs or leftovers) that has been above 41°F for two hours or more.

WHEN IN DOUBT

THROW IT OUT!!



CLEANING AND SANITIZING FOOD CONTACT SURFACES AND EQUIPMENT

1. Dishes, cooking equipment, refrigerator interiors, counter tops and other surfaces that may have been contaminated by spoiled food must be thoroughly cleaned and sanitized before using.
2. When cleaning or disinfecting, wear protective clothing, such as gloves, to avoid skin contact, irritation, or infection.
3. Thoroughly wash any pans, dishes or utensils that have been in contact with spoiled food using hot, soapy water. Rinse and then sanitize by boiling in clean water or immersing in a sanitizing solution for 15 minutes. Allow to air dry.
4. Thoroughly wash and sanitize the interior of refrigerators and freezers and any other food contact surfaces that may have been contaminated.

SANITIZING SOLUTION:

1 tablespoon unscented, liquid bleach per gallon of potable water.



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