

FOOD SAFETY INFOSHEET: RECOVERING FROM A STORM

Frozen Foods



If the power goes out what can I keep?

Keep the refrigerator and freezer doors closed as much as possible to maintain the cold temperature. You may safely re-freeze foods that still contain ice crystals or that have been kept at 41° F or below.

MEAT, POULTRY, SEAFOOD	Still contains ice crystals and feels as cold as if refrigerated	Thawed. Held above 41°F for over 2 hours
Beef, veal, lamb, pork, and ground meats	Refreeze	Discard
Poultry and ground poultry	Refreeze	Discard
Variety meats (liver, kidney, heart, chitterlings)	Refreeze	Discard
Casseroles, stews, soups	Refreeze	Discard
Fish, shellfish, breaded seafood products	Refreeze. However, there will be some texture and flavor loss.	Discard



DAIRY	Still contains ice crystals and feels as cold as if refrigerated	Thawed. Held above 41°F for over 2 hours
Milk	Refreeze. May lose some texture.	Discard
Eggs (out of shell) and egg products	Refreeze	Discard
Ice cream, frozen yogurt	Discard	Discard
Cheese (soft and semi-soft)	Refreeze. May lose some texture.	Discard
Hard cheeses	Refreeze	Refreeze
Shredded cheeses	Refreeze	Discard
Casseroles containing milk, cream, eggs, soft cheeses	Refreeze	Discard
Cheesecake	Refreeze	Discard

BREADS, PASTRIES	Still contains ice crystals and feels as cold as if refrigerated	Thawed. Held above 41°F for over 2 hours
Breads, rolls, muffins, cakes (without custard fillings)	Refreeze	Refreeze
Cakes, pies, pastries with custard or cheese filling	Refreeze	Discard
Pie crusts, commercial and homemade bread dough	Refreeze. Some quality loss may occur.	Refreeze. Quality loss is considerable.



OTHER	Still contains ice crystals and feels as cold as if refrigerated	Thawed. Held above 41°F for over 2 hours
Casseroles – pasta, rice based	Refreeze	Discard
Flour, cornmeal, nuts	Refreeze	Refreeze
Breakfast items –waffles, pancakes, bagels	Refreeze	Refreeze
Frozen meal, entree, specialty items (pizza, sausage and biscuit, meat pie,convenience foods)	Refreeze	Discard





FRUITS	Still contains ice crystals and feels as cold as if refrigerated	Thawed. Held above 41°F for over 2 hours
Juices	Refreeze	Refreeze. Discard if mold, yeasty smell, or sliminess develops.
Home or commercially packaged	Refreeze. Will change texture and flavor.	Refreeze. Discard if mold, yeasty smell, or sliminess develops.

VEGETABLES	Still contains ice crystals and feels as cold as if refrigerated	Thawed. Held above 41°F for over 2 hours
Juices	Refreeze	Discard after held above 40 °F for 6 hours.
Home or commercially packaged or blanched	Refreeze. May suffer texture and flavor loss.	Discard after held above 40 °F for 6 hours.



When the power goes out

- Place a thermometer in your fridge and freezer
- Use a tip-sensitive digital thermometer to check foods (cooking and storage temperatures).
- Have items that don't require refrigeration and can be eaten cold or heated on an outdoor grill.
- Unsafe food may not appear or smell to be spoiled.
- A closed fridge will keep food below 41° F only about 4 hours after a power loss.
- A closed freezer can keep food below 41° F for up to 48 hrs if full and kept cold.

Benjamin Chapman, Ph.D.
 Assistant Professor, Food Safety Specialist
 Department of 4-H Youth Development and Family &
 Consumer Sciences
 North Carolina State University, NC Cooperative
 Extension
 919.515.8099 (office)
 benjamin_chapman@ncsu.edu