



# Meal Prep and Food Safety During a Winter Storm

During a winter storm you may experience power failure and might not have refrigeration, water or heat for cooking. To prepare food without power or safe water, follow these guidelines.



## Keeping Frozen Foods

- Full freezers stay colder longer.
- Packing freezers with ice and keeping the door closed can help keep food cold.
- Foods are still safe to eat as long as they stay at or below 41°F.
- Foods that stayed below 41°F can be safely refrozen. However, there may be changes in quality.
- Check temperatures with a tip-sensitive thermometer.

## Cooking Without Power

- Use an outdoor grill, fireplace, camp stove or charcoal burner.
- Choose foods that cook quickly. Avoid frozen foods because they need more heat and cook time than shelf-stable foods.
- Eat commercially packaged foods straight from the container.

## Cooking Without Safe Water

- Substitute canned stocks/broths or liquids from canned fruits, vegetables for water.
- Clear water from questionable sources should be brought to a rolling boil for 1 minute and cooled before use. Cloudy water should be filtered before boiling.
- Water can be treated with unscented bleach. For clear water, add 1/8 teaspoon bleach per gallon. For cloudy water, add 1/4 teaspoon bleach per gallon. Allow to stand for 30 minutes before drinking or using for cooking.

## No Power for Refrigeration

- Open only enough cans or jars of food for one meal as leftover food in jars and cans cannot be saved.
- Prepare and eat foods in their original containers.
- Substitute canned and powdered milk for fresh milk.
- Eat cut leafy greens, tomatoes and melons within 4 hours

## Cooking Food Safely

- Never use outdoor grills or burners inside your home, even in a fireplace. Fumes from grills and camping stoves can be deadly.
- Never use lighter fluid in a fireplace, as flames can cause damage to the home.
- When cooking, heat foods to the following internal temperatures for food safety: Eggs, whole meats, fish: **145°F**; Ground meats, fish: **158°F**; Whole and ground poultry: **165°F**.