

NEWS RELEASE

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Food Safety During a PG&E Public Safety Power Shutoff

Many people will be effected by planned power shutoffs this fire season. With a loss of power, refrigerators and freezers are not able to keep food chilled at safe temperatures. This increases the risk of foodborne illnesses. Perishable foods such as meat, eggs, and dairy should always be kept at **or below 40°F and frozen foods at or below 0°F**. The following tips will keep your food safe during a power outage:

- **Keep the doors of the refrigerator and freezer closed as much as possible!**
A refrigerator can keep food at safe temperatures up to 4 hours, and a full freezer approximately 48 hours (24 hours if half full) if the doors remain closed.
- **Have a plan in place to obtain dry or blocked ice for prolonged power outages.**
50 pounds of dry ice will keep food safe in an 18-cubic foot freezer for 2 days.
- Prepare ahead of time by filling plastic storage containers with water and store them in the freezer. The frozen containers can be used as ice blocks in the freezer, refrigerator, or ice chest to keep food at safe temperatures.
- **Be temperature wise!** Keep thermometers in the refrigerator and freezer to help you determine if foods have been exposed to unsafe temperatures during a power outage. If you are unsure if your perishable foods have been exposed to unsafe temperatures, use a food thermometer and check each item separately.
- **Never taste food to determine its safety!** The appearance and odor of food will not determine if it's safe to eat. Throw away any perishable foods such as meat, eggs, and dairy that have been kept at 41°F or warmer for 2 hours or more!

Keeping your food safe during a power outage will prevent you and your family from being exposed to foodborne illnesses and prevent food from going to waste. For more information and tips on food safety during a power outage visit USDA, Food Safety Education at:

https://www.fsis.usda.gov/wps/portal/food-safety-education/get-answers/food-safety-fact-sheets/emergency-preparedness/keeping-food-safe-during-an-emergency/CT_Index

<https://www.foodsafety.gov/food-safety-charts/food-safety-during-power-outage>

Children and adults participating in the Let's Eat Healthy! Program are learning about healthy living habits. For more nutrition or program information, please call (530) 889-7350 or visit our website at <http://ucanr.edu/sites/letseathealthy>. "Like" us on Facebook for additional tips and updates at CalFresh Healthy Living, University of California, Placer/Nevada Counties.

This material was produced by the CalFresh Healthy Living, University of California Program with funding from USDA SNAP, known in California as CalFresh. These institutions are equal opportunity providers and employers. CalFresh provides assistance to low-income households and can help buy nutritious foods for better health. For CalFresh information, call 1-877-847-3663.

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