

**CRAVEN COUNTY ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH  
FOOD SAFETY ADVSORY COUNCIL**

# WHAT TO DO IN THE EVENT OF A POWER OUTAGE

## Potentially Hazardous Foods (PHF) include:

High protein foods: meat, poultry, fish, eggs, dairy, cheeses, cooked rice, beans, potatoes, pasta and Vegetables; potato, pasta salads, custards, puddings, and leafy greens and other similar food.



### 1 Stop Operations

- No food preparation or service
- Record time of power outage



### 2 While the Power is Out

- Check the temperature of the Potentially Hazardous Food (PHF)
  - **PHF that is at or below 41°F** at the time of the power outage: **KEEP COLD**
  - **PHF that is between 42°F –135°F** at the time of the power outage: **THROW AWAY**
- Place bags of ice in coolers/freezers
- Keep refrigerator/freezer doors closed



### 3 After Power is Restored

- When the power comes back, check cold holding and throw away any PHF above 41°F or use the table below for guidelines on what food is safe to keep or serve. If the time is unknown, **THROW AWAY!**
- **Check operations of:**
  - Refrigerators/freezers
  - Hot and cold potable water
  - Hot food holding systems
  - Ventilation systems
  - Cooking equipment
- Frozen food that remained frozen can be saved

## Cold Food Temperature and Holding Time Guidelines

Time	42°F to 45°F	46°F to 50°F	51° or above
0 to 4 hours	Safe to sell	Immediately cool to 41°F	Reheat to 165°F
4 to 12 hours	Safe to sell	Immediately cool to 41°F	PHF cannot be sold, throw away the food
12+ hours	Immediately cool to 41°F	PHF cannot be sold, throw away the food	PHF cannot be sold, throw away the food

Contact the Environmental Health Section of the Craven County Health Department for any questions and for re-opening

**(252) 636-4936**



# Power Outage TIPS

## EXTRA PRECAUTIONS

- Have a backup generator so your refrigeration and freezer units can remain running.
- Install additional emergency lighting that will remain on during an outage.
- Install thermometer and alarms on your refrigeration equipment.
- Monitor how long the food has been exposed to high temperatures.
- Keep extra ice on hand or freeze containers of water to help stock smaller freezers and coolers.
- Keep refrigerator and freezer doors closed as much as possible.
- Turn off and unplug all unnecessary electrical equipment, including sensitive electronics.
- Never use a generator or other gasoline, propane, natural gas or charcoal burning devices indoors.



## PREPARE

Make sure to have:

- Flashlights available and ensure they are charged and/or have working batteries, and are easily accessible locations.
- Emergency phone numbers printed out. The list of quick access phone numbers should include: Local Health Department, utility companies, staff members, and upcoming reservations (so you can call guests to reschedule).
- Ongoing staff training around power outages, so employees are prepared when and if this occurs. Do practice drills with your staff on the different types of emergencies.
- Evacuation plans set.



Emergency Operation Checklist  
for Food Service Establishments

## Business Continuity During A Power Outage

Discuss your emergency plan with your regulatory authority, in some cases, the regulatory authority may want to pre-approve your plan or temporary procedures.



Foodprotect.org



## RECOVERY

- Ensure all of your equipment is working properly, reset circuit breakers, and make sure water is hot enough to properly clean and sanitize (Minimum 110°F)
- Discard any food that has been time-temperature abused for too long.
- Don't taste food to see if it has spoiled. When in doubt, throw it out!
- Review your plan and see if there is any room for improvement.

# When in doubt, Throw it Out!