

Press Release

DHHS Provides Recommendations on Food Safety During Power Outages

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Concord, NH – The New Hampshire Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) Division of Public Health Services (DPHS) is providing food safety recommendations for residents in case they lose power as a result of Hurricane Sandy.

"As important as it is to have enough food and water on hand for your family in case you lose power, is to make sure you keep the food safe to avoid the potential for food-borne illness," said New Hampshire's Public Health Director Dr. José Montero. "Food safety is always a big concern when the power is off for an extended period of time. We would advise people to take extra care when determining if their food should be saved or thrown out. Sometimes it can be difficult to tell if it has been contaminated with dangerous bacteria. We would advise people if they have any doubt to throw it out."

The US Department of Agriculture recommends taking the following steps during and after a weather emergency:

- Never taste food to determine if it is safe
- Keep the refrigerator and freezer doors closed as much as possible to maintain the cold temperature
- The refrigerator will keep food safely cold for about 4 hours if it is unopened. A full freezer will hold the temperature approximately 48 hours (24 hours if it is half full) and the door remains closed
- Food can be safely refrozen if it still contains ice crystals or is at 40°F or below
- Get block ice or dry ice to keep your refrigerator and freezer as cold as possible if the power is going to be out for an extended period of time
- Discard refrigerated perishable food such as meat, poultry, fish, soft cheeses, milk, eggs, leftovers, and deli items after 4 hours without power.

For more information, visit

http://www.fsis.usda.gov/PDF/Severe_Storms_and_Hurricanes_Guide.pdf.