

# Meal Preparation and Food Safety After a Power Failure

After a power failure, you might not have heat, refrigeration, or water.

To prepare food when you have no power, follow these guidelines.



## Little or no heat or electricity?

- If you have limited heat for cooking, choose foods that cook quickly.
- Do not cook frozen foods because they require much more cooking time and heat than canned goods.
- Eat commercially canned foods straight from the can.

## Little or no refrigeration?

- Substitute liquids from canned vegetables for water in unsweetened cooked dishes.
- All water from questionable sources that will be used in food preparation must be boiled for at least 10 minutes before use.

With the door closed, food in most freezers will stay below 41°F for up to 3 days, even in the summer. Thawing rate depends on:

- The amount of food in the freezer
- The kind of food
- The temperature of the food
- The freezer
- The size of freezer

You may safely re-freeze foods that still contain ice crystals or that have remained below 41°F.

If you can't use your stove, you can use a:

- Fireplace.
- Candle warmer, such as a fondue pot. Do not use a candle warmer to cook raw meats, fish, poultry, and eggs.
- An outside camp stove and charcoal burner. Never use a fuel-burning camp stove or charcoal burner inside your home, even in a fireplace. Fumes from these stoves can be deadly.

## Little or no safe water?

- If you are without refrigeration, only open enough cans or jars of food for one meal. Leftover food in jars and cans cannot be saved.
- If necessary, substitute canned and powdered milk for fresh milk.
- Prepare and eat foods in their original containers, if possible.