



Child Care Food Program
2007

Providing Food Service During Emergencies

In the event of a natural or man made emergency the following recommendations can help you protect the safety of food and water at your child care facility.

I. How long will the foods in the refrigerator and freezer be safe after the power goes off?

Refrigerator (41° F or below)

- Refrigerated foods can be kept safe for about 4 hours if refrigerator door remains closed. Remember you can't rely on appearance and odor.
- Use refrigerated foods first.
- Always use an appliance thermometer.
- Know where to obtain dry or regular ice.
- Know how to use dry ice properly.

Freezer (0° F or below)

- If door remains closed, frozen foods can be kept safe for about 48 hours if freezer is full – 24 hours if half full.
- Use frozen foods second.
- Always use an appliance thermometer.

II. Things to consider before an emergency.

- Always freeze refrigerated foods that you may not need immediately.
- Freeze containers of water for ice to help keep food cold in the freezer, refrigerator and coolers.
- Group food together in the freezer – food will stay colder longer.

III. Can I refreeze foods that are partially or completely thawed?

If the appliance thermometer stored in the freezer reads 40° or below when the power comes back on, the food is safe and may be refrozen. Partial thawing and refreezing may reduce the quality of some food.

IV. What is dry ice and how is it used?

- Dry ice is the solid form of the gas, carbon dioxide (CO₂). Dry ice has a lower temperature than regular ice (frozen water). Dry ice is extremely cold (-109.3°F or -78.5°C).
- When using dry ice, handle with care. Use gloves, an oven mitt, or a folded towel as dry ice can burn the skin. Avoid breathing the gas.
- Do not eat dry ice.
- If using dry ice, 25 pounds of dry ice will keep a ten-cubic foot freezer below freezing for 3-4 days.

V. What are a few non-perishable (commercially canned) foods that are cooked and can be eaten safely?

Meat/meat alternates

- Variety of canned and/or fresh pack meats such as tuna, chicken
- Beans
- Peanut butter
- School pack ravioli

Fruits

- Variety of canned fruits and/or single serve
- Variety of fruit juices (100% juice, pasteurized, vitamin C fortified) – cans, boxes, bottles
- Dried fruits

Vegetables

- Variety of canned vegetables
- Vegetable juices, e.g., V8

Grain/breads

- Soft tortillas
- Sandwich bread (extra can be kept on hand in freezer)
- Canned noodles in sauce
- Crackers
- Ready-to-eat cereals
- Ready-to-eat granola/cereal bars and toaster pastries
- Cookies

Milk

- Milk, Nonfat dry
- Ultra High Temperature (UHT box milk)

Water

- Bottled or
- Boiled

Other foods

- Mayonnaise or salad dressing condiment packets to mix with canned meats for immediate use.
- Sugar, jelly, salt, pepper

VI. What are some non-food supplies I may need to store?

- Disposable meal service products – plates, utensils, napkins, cups
- Trash bags
- Hand sanitizer
- Paper towels
- Bleach
- Disinfectant wipes

VII. What types of alternative cooking methods can be used if the power is out?

- Fireplace
- Outdoor grill
- Fuel-burning camp stove or charcoal burners
- Wood burning stoves

Alternative cooking methods must be used with appropriate caution. Use extreme care when using open flames.

Reduce the risk of fire or carbon monoxide poisoning, **do not use** equipment intended for outdoor cooking inside. For example, outdoor grill, fuel burning camp stoves or charcoal burners should never be used indoors.

Use a meat thermometer to ensure that food reaches a safe internal temperature.

- Roast (Beef, Pork and Ham) should be cooked to 170°F
- Poultry (ground and poultry dishes) should be cooked to 165°F
- Ground meat should be cooked to 160°F
- Fish should be cooked to 145°F; it should look opaque and flake easily.

VIII. What are some easy sample menus?

Breakfast Ideas

- Ready-to-eat cereal, juice or canned fruit, milk (fresh if available, then reconstituted dry or UHT)
- Granola/cereal bar, juice or canned fruit, milk (fresh if available, then reconstituted dry or UHT)
- Toaster pastry, juice or canned fruit, milk (fresh if available, then reconstituted dry or UHT)

Lunch Ideas

- Tuna salad sandwich, canned peaches, apple juice, milk (fresh if available, then reconstituted dry or UHT)
- Soft tortilla, refried beans, corn, pineapple tidbits, milk (fresh if available, then reconstituted dry or UHT)
- Canned noodles in sauce with beans, pears, green beans, milk (fresh if available, then reconstituted dry or UHT)

Snack Ideas

- Crackers and oranges or grape-juice
- Cookies and pears
- Peanut butter crackers and orange juice

IX. Water:

One gallon of water per person per day is recommended. Should individuals be put on a boil water notice, the Florida Department of Health (DOH) advises taking precautions against contaminated water, especially individuals with private wells.

DOH recommends one of the following when a boil water notice is issued:

- Use bottled water for drinking, or;
- Boil the water before drinking, holding it in a rolling boil for one minute; or
- Disinfect it by adding 8 drops of plain unscented household bleach per gallon of water, and then let it stand for 30 minutes. If the water is cloudy after 30 minutes, repeat the procedure.

After the flooding subsides:

- Disinfect your well using the procedures available from your local health department, or provided on the MyFlorida web page at: <http://www.doh.state.fl.us/environment/water/manual/floodinf.htm> and
- Have your water tested by your local health department, or by a laboratory certified by the State to do drinking water analyses.

For further information, please contact your local county health department or visit www.doh.state.fl.us

X. Where can I find more information on how to prepare for emergencies?

- Visit the Florida Emergency Response Management website for information and customized emergency plans that you can print out and save for future emergencies. <http://www.floridadisaster.org/index.asp>
Your plan will include steps you can take to save time and money in preparing your business for an emergency or disaster.
- Visit USDA Food Safety and Inspection Services, "Fact Sheets" for Emergency Preparedness information. http://www.fsis.usda.gov/fact_sheets/keeping_food_safe_during_an_emergency/index.asp
- Visit the Department of Health and Human Services Preparedness and Response Program for "Emergency Response Planning for Child Care Providers" to obtain information on building an effective emergency response plan. http://www.naccho.org/pubs/documents/na132_emergency.pdf

