

Power outages: food safety after a power failure

Community information

What do I need to do to keep food safe?

Before and after a power failure

- Try to keep cold and frozen food as cold as possible. This is the most important thing. If food is still cold to touch (less than 5 °C), it is safe to use.
- Once cold or frozen food is no longer cold to touch, it can be kept and eaten for up to four hours and then it must be thrown away or, if it is raw meat, it should be cooked and eaten.
- Eat hot food within four hours of it being hot, or throw it away.
- If the power comes back on when frozen food is still solid the food is safe to refreeze.

Things to do during a power failure

- Move food from the fridge to the freezer.
- If available, put bagged ice under food packages and trays stored in freezers and fridges if the power failure lasts more than one hour.
- Place an insulating blanket over cold or frozen food where possible.
- Only open the fridge and freezer doors when absolutely necessary. This will keep the food and air temperature colder for longer.