

# Power Outages : Four Tips to Reduce Food Safety Risks

**For households**

Natural disasters and emergencies frequently cause power outages that can compromise the quality and safety of your food. Keep yourself and your family safe and healthy by following these simple tips.

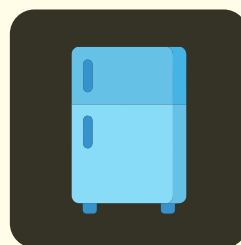
## TIP 1

### Unsafe food must be thrown away.

**Assess if food has become unsafe as a result of power outages.**



Food that does not require temperature control — such as dried food, drinks, and food in cans and jars — is safe to consume.



Food stored in refrigerators should be safe if the power outage lasts less than four hours and if the refrigerator is kept closed.



**If food smells bad or looks different (for example, slimy or mouldy), it is not safe for human consumption. This can include:**

- Perishable food such as meat, poultry, fish or eggs that have been exposed to temperatures above 5 °C for more than two hours.
- Items stored in refrigerators that have been in contact with liquids or juices from raw meat.
- Canned food and bottled beverages that may have been contaminated by thawing liquids seeping in under caps and lids.



Contamination may occur without visible signs. When in doubt, throw it out.

#### Discard unsafe food.

- Unsafe food must be thrown away.
- Ensure that unsafe food is made inaccessible to other people.

#### Purchase and use only safe food and water from reliable and trusted sources.

- Be alert for signs that the food has been stored at unsafe or improper temperatures or been unhygienically handled.
- Do not consume food that is clearly labelled as unsafe for human consumption.

## TIP 2

### Use only clean and safe food, water and facilities.



#### Ensure that safe food is protected.

- Food in a full freezer is safe for approximately 48 hours (24 hours if half full).
- Minimize the frequency of opening freezers and refrigerators.
- You may buy dry ice or ice blocks to keep the temperatures low in your freezer and refrigerator.

#### Prioritize consuming perishable food first.

- Use thawed food items immediately.
- Do not refreeze items unless they clearly retain ice crystals.
- Save canned food and bottled drinks for later.

#### Use only clean and safe food and water.

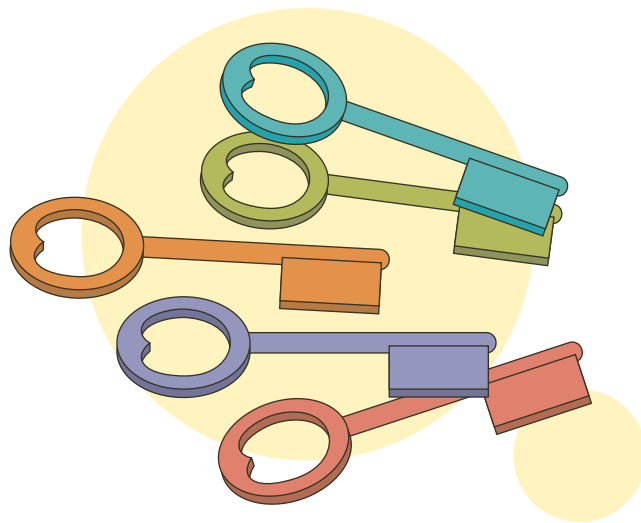
- All food and drinks must be stored in cool and dry places, away from sources of contamination such as moisture and direct sunlight.
- Handle food with clean hands and utensils, and cook it thoroughly.

## TIP 3

### Maintain good food hygiene.

#### Follow the five keys to safer food.

- 1 Keep clean
- 2 Separate raw and cooked food
- 3 Cook thoroughly
- 4 Keep food at safe temperatures
- 5 Use safe water and raw ingredients



**Maintain exclusive breastfeeding of infants under six months.** Do not give infants water or other fluids that may contain chemicals or bacteria that can infect them.

## TIP 4

### Stay informed and healthy.

**Follow the advice of local authorities responsible for food safety.** Share this information with your family members and neighbours.

**Seek help from a health facility if anyone in your household gets sick.** Clean up vomit and faeces properly to avoid contaminating yourself and others.



For more information, please visit **The Five Keys to Safer Food Programme** recommended by the World Health Organization: <https://www.who.int/activities/promoting-safe-food-handling>

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