



County of Santa Cruz

Health Services Agency - Environmental Health

701 Ocean Street, Room 312, Santa Cruz, CA 95060
(831) 454-2022 TDD/TTY - Call 711 <http://www.scceh.org>
EnvironmentalHealth@santacruzcounty.us



Protecting Food During a Flood

If Power is Lost:

- Discontinue all food preparation until power is restored.
- If refrigerator and freezer doors are kept closed, safe food temperatures can be maintained below 41°F (refrigerator cold) for several hours.
- When power is restored, all potentially hazardous food must be temperature checked to determine if it can be consumed.
 - If perishable foods are below 41°F, they may be consumed.
 - Use the chart below to determine what food to keep when food is above 41°F:

length of outage	Internal Temperature of REFRIGERATED Potentially Hazardous Foods (PHF) when power is restored		
	45°F or below	46°F to 50°F	50°F or above
0-2 hours	PHF can be sold	Immediately cool PHF to 41°F or below within 2 hours	PHF cannot be sold
2-3 hours	PHF can be sold, but must be cooled to 41°F or below within 2 hours	Immediately cool PHF to 41°F or below within 1 hour	
4 or more hours	Immediately cool PHF to 41°F or below within 1 hour	PHF cannot be sold	
If food cannot be cooled as specified above, it cannot be sold			
length of outage	Potentially Hazardous Foods (PHF) in HOT HOLDING Units below 135°F when power is restored		
0-2 hours	1. Food may be sold if reheated to 165°F and then held at 135°F or above; OR 2. Food may be sold if cooled to 41°F or below within 2 hours following restoration of power; if food cannot be cooled within 2 hours, it cannot be sold.		
2 or more hours	PHF cannot be sold		

- If generators are not available to maintain power to refrigerators and freezers during an extended power outage, then all potentially hazardous foods must be discarded.

WHEN IN DOUBT, THROW IT OUT!

If at Risk of Flooding:

- If possible, use sandbags and move all food items and food storage equipment to higher elevations to prevent water damage.
- Discontinue all food preparation.
- Discard cardboard juice/milk/baby formula boxes and home canned foods if they have come in contact with flood water as they cannot be effectively cleaned and sanitized.

- Discard any non-waterproof food items that may have come into contact with flood water.
 - **Non-waterproof food containers** include those with screw-caps, snap lids, pull tops, and crimped caps.
 - **Waterproof food containers** include undamaged, commercially prepared foods in all-metal cans and “retort pouches” (flexible, shelf-stable juice or seafood pouches).
- **Discard food in damaged cans** which include those cans with swelling, leakage, punctures, holes, fractures, extensive deep rusting, or crushing/denting that is severe enough to prevent normal stacking or opening with a manual, wheel-type can opener.
- **Clean and sanitize** all flood affected areas in the food facility (including salvageable canned foods) as follows:
 1. Use potable water,
 2. Wash with hot soapy water,
 3. Rinse with potable water, and
 4. Sanitize in a solution of 1 tablespoon of unscented, liquid chlorine bleach per gallon of potable water for at least 30 seconds.

Boil Water Notices:

- **If Boil Water Notice is issued**, turn off water to vending machines, beverage dispensers, drinking fountains, produce misting systems, coffee makers and ice machines.
 - Use only bottled water or boiled water for handwashing during cleanup
- **When Boil Water Notice is lifted**, flush lines and sanitize all vending machines, beverage dispensers, drinking fountains, produce misting systems, coffee makers and ice machines.
 - Flush all faucets in restrooms, kitchen, waiter stations and drinking fountains.
 - Clean and sanitize all fixtures, sinks, and equipment connected to water supply lines.
 - Clean and sanitize all dishes, utensils, and work areas.
- Environmental Health inspectors may visit to verify your facility is handling food safely.

Equipment and structural changes and repairs may require plan review and permitting prior to reinstating service if damage is significant.