

Preparing for electricity outages

First, use perishable food from the refrigerator, then use food from the freezer. To minimize the number of times you open the freezer door, post a list of contents on the freezer door.

In a well-insulated freezer, foods will usually still have ice crystals in their centers (meaning the foods are safe to eat) for at least three days. Finally, begin to use nonperishable foods and staples.

Short-Term Food Supplies

Use within six months:

- Powdered milk (boxed)
- Dried fruit (in metal container)
- Dry, crisp crackers (in metal container)
- Potatoes
- Whole dry milk
- Canned fruit juices
- Canned meats and fish (example: Vienna sausage, meat spread or tuna)
- Meat substitutes, like beans
- Bread and crackers
- Peanut butter
- Dry cereals
- Granola bars or cookies
- Staples-sugar, salt, pepper
- High energy foods—peanut butter, jelly, crackers, nuts, health food bars, trail mix
- Stress foods-sugar cookies, hard candy, sweetened cereals
- Vitamins
- Ready-to-eat canned meats, fruits, and vegetables
- Smoked or dried meats; such as beef jerky
- Juices-canned, powdered, or crystalized
- Soups-bouillon cubes or dried “soups in a cup”

Long-Term Food Supplies

May be stored indefinitely (in proper containers and conditions):

- Wheat
- Corn
- Soybeans
- Vitamin C
- Salt
- White rice
- Powdered milk (in nitrogen-packed cans)
- Vegetable oils
- Dry pasta
- Instant coffee, tea and cocoa
- Noncarbonated soft drinks
- Bouillon products
- Baking powder

Use within one year:

- Canned condensed meat and vegetable soups
- Canned fruits, fruit juices, and vegetables
- Ready-to-eat cereals and uncooked instant cereals (in metal containers)
- Peanut butter
- Jelly
- Hard candy, chocolate bars, and canned nuts

For emergency cooking, you can use a fireplace, a charcoal grill, or camp stove outdoors only. You can also heat food with a candle warmer, chafing dishes, and fondue pots. Canned food can be eaten right out of the can. If you heat it in the can, be sure to open the can and remove the label first. Rotate your food supply. Use foods before they go bad and replace them with fresh supplies, dated with ink or marker. Place new items at the back of the storage area and older ones in front.

Your emergency food supply should be of the highest quality possible. Inspect your reserves periodically to make sure there are no broken seals or dented containers.

Place paper or waxed packages in a watertight container, such as a larger plastic bag. This will keep them dry and make them easier to carry.

