



Wicomico County Health Department

108 East Main Street • Salisbury, Maryland 21801

Lori Brewster, MS, APRN/BC, LCADC • Health Officer

To: All Wicomico County Food Service Facilities

From: Lori Brewster, M.S., APRN/BC, LCADC
Health Officer

RE: Emergency Preparedness Guidance For Retail Food Service Facilities

Please be advised that all facilities must close in the event of an electrical and/or water outage. If the electrical outage lasts for more than 4 hours, you may not re-open without receiving approval from the Department of Environmental Health. Please contact us at 410-546-4446 (business hours) or 410-543-6996 (after hours) for re-opening instructions. Facilities can follow these general guidelines to ensure that their food supplies are safe:

1. Make sure you have appliance thermometers in your refrigerator *and* freezer. Check to ensure that the freezer temperature is at or below 0 °F and the refrigerator is at or below 40 °F.
2. Store food on shelves that will be safely out of the way of contaminated water in case of flooding.
3. Keep the refrigerator and freezer doors closed as much as possible to maintain the cold temperature.
4. If you plan to prepare refrigerated or frozen meat, poultry, fish or eggs while it is still at safe temperatures, it's important that each item is thoroughly cooked to the proper temperature to assure that any foodborne bacteria that may be present is destroyed. However, if at any point the food was above 40° F for 4 hours or more — discard it.
5. If an appliance thermometer was kept in the freezer, check the temperature when the power comes back on. If the freezer thermometer reads 40°F or below, the food is safe and may be refrozen.
6. Refrigerated food should be safe as long as the power was out for no more than 4 hours and the refrigerator door was kept shut. Discard any perishable food (such as meat, poultry, fish, eggs or leftovers) that has been above 40°F for four hours or more.
7. Keep in mind that perishable food such as meat, poultry, seafood, milk, and eggs that are not kept adequately refrigerated or frozen may cause illness if consumed, even when they are thoroughly cooked.
8. Discard any food that may have come into contact with flood water. When in doubt, throw it out.
9. Thoroughly wash metal pans, ceramic dishes, and utensils (including can openers) with soap and water, using hot water if available. Rinse, and then sanitize them by boiling in clean water or immersing them for 15 minutes in a solution of 1 tablespoon of unscented, liquid chlorine bleach per gallon of drinking water (or the cleanest, clearest water available).
10. Thoroughly wash countertops with soap and water, using hot water if available. Rinse, and then sanitize by applying a solution of 1 tablespoon of unscented, liquid chlorine bleach per gallon of drinking water (or the cleanest, clearest water available). Allow to air dry.

Remember: When In Doubt, Throw It Out

108 East Main Street, Salisbury, MD 21801, 410-546-4446

After Hours Emergency Number: 410-543-6996

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