



STATE OF OHIO

Emergency Operations Center

MEDIA RELEASE

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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POWER OUTAGE CALLS FOR CAUTION WITH FOOD AND WATER SAFETY

COLUMBUS – With more than 250,000 Ohio homes and businesses without electricity due to the impact of Superstorm Sandy, the Ohio Emergency Management Agency (Ohio EMA) and the Ohio Department of Health (ODH) remind Ohioans to heed food safety precautions.

Refrigerators and freezers can keep food cool and safe for a limited amount of time without a power source. However, spoiled food can pose a health risk.

Food Safety Tips

Food from the refrigerator should be thrown out if the power is out more than four hours. Never taste food to determine its safety; appearance and odor are not indicators of food safety. Keep the door closed as much as possible.

If the power is out for longer than two hours, follow the guidelines below:

- Discard any perishable food (such as meat, poultry, fish, eggs, and leftovers) that have been above 40 °F for over 2 hours.
- For the refrigerator: Pack milk, other dairy products, meat, fish, eggs, gravy, and spoilable leftovers into a cooler surrounded by ice. Inexpensive Styrofoam coolers are fine for this purpose.
- A freezer that is half full will hold food safely for up to 24 hours. A full freezer will hold food safely for 48 hours. Do not open the freezer door if you can avoid it.

For more information, see [Keeping Food and Water Safe after a Natural Disaster or Power Outage](#) and [Preventing Illness after a Natural Disaster](#) on the CDC's website, or contact the FDA Food Safety Hotline at 1-888-723-3366.

Water Safety

Electrical power outages may affect the operation of your private home water or sewage treatment system. Learn what to do if you have a [private water system](#) or [sewage treatment system](#). You may also contact your local health department.

More Information

For residents without power, please contact your local 211 for information and lists of resources. Call 911 in an emergency. Information is also available online at www.ema.ohio.gov. Follow along on Twitter with #OHwx.

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