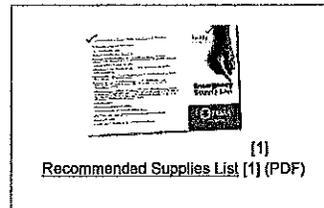




MAINTAINING YOUR KIT

Just as important as putting your supplies together is maintaining them so they are safe to use when needed. Here are some tips to keep your supplies ready and in good condition:

- Keep canned [food](#) [2] in a cool, dry place.
- Store boxed food in tightly closed plastic or metal containers to protect from pests and to extend its shelf life.
- Throw out any canned good that becomes swollen, dented or corroded.
- Use foods before they go bad and replace them with fresh supplies.
- Place new items at the back of the storage area and older ones in the front.
- Change stored food and [water supplies](#) [3] every six months. Be sure to write the date you store it on all containers.
- Re-think your needs every year and update your kit as your family's needs change.



Keep items in airtight plastic bags and put your entire disaster supplies kit in one or two easy-to-carry containers, such as an unused trashcan, camping backpack or duffel bag.

Last updated: 01/28/2014 - 03:58 PM

Source URL: <http://www.ready.gov/maintaining-your-kit>

Links

[1] <http://www.fema.gov/media-library/assets/documents/90354>

[2] <http://www.ready.gov/food>

[3] <http://www.ready.gov/water>

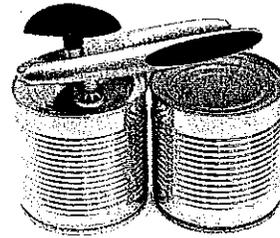


FOOD

Consider the following things when putting together your emergency food supplies:

- Store at least a three-day supply of non-perishable food.
- Choose foods your family will eat.
- Remember any special dietary needs.
- Avoid foods that will make you thirsty.
- Choose salt-free crackers, whole grain cereals and canned foods with high liquid content.

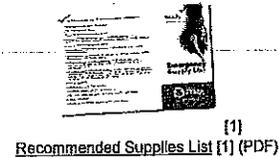
Following a disaster, there may be power outages that could last for several days. Stock canned foods, dry mixes and other staples that do not require refrigeration, cooking, water or special preparation. Be sure to include a manual can opener and eating utensils.



Suggested Emergency Food Supplies

The following items are suggested when selecting emergency food supplies. You may already have many of these on hand.

- Ready-to-eat canned meats, fruits, vegetables and a can opener
- Protein or fruit bars
- Dry cereal or granola
- Peanut butter
- Dried fruit
- Nuts
- Crackers
- Canned juices
- Non-perishable pasteurized milk
- High energy foods
- Vitamins
- Food for Infants
- Comfort/stress foods

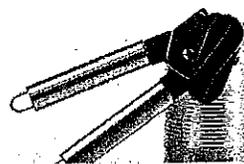


Food Safety & Sanitation

Flood, fire, national disaster or the loss of power from high winds, snow or ice could jeopardize the safety of your food. [Knowing what to do before and after an emergency \[2\]](#) can help you reduce your risk of illness and minimize the amount of food that may be lost due to spoilage.

Power outages can occur at any time of the year and it may take from a few hours to several days for electricity to be restored to residential areas. Without electricity or a cold source, food stored in refrigerators and freezers can become unsafe. Bacteria in food grow rapidly at temperatures between 40 and 140 °F, and if these foods are consumed, people can become very sick.

Do:



- Keep food in covered containers.
- Keep cooking and eating utensils clean.
- Keep garbage in closed containers and dispose outside, burying garbage if necessary.
- Keep your hands clean by washing them frequently with soap and water that has been boiled or disinfected.
- Discard any food that has come into contact with contaminated floodwater.
- Discard any food that has been at room temperature for two hours or more.
- Discard any food that has an unusual odor, color or texture.
- Use ready-to-feed formula, if possible, for formula-fed infants. If using ready-to-feed formula is not possible, it is best to use bottled water to prepare powdered or concentrated formula. If bottled water is not available, use boiled water. Use treated water to prepare formula only if you do not have bottled or boiled water. Breastfed infants should continue breastfeeding.

Don't:

- Eat foods from cans that are swollen, dented or corroded, even though the product may look safe to eat.
- Eat any food that looks or smells abnormal, even if the can looks normal.
- Let garbage accumulate inside, both for fire and sanitation reasons.

Note: Thawed food usually can be eaten if it is still "refrigerator cold." It can be re-frozen if it still contains ice crystals. To be safe, remember, "When in doubt, throw it out."

For more information about food safety during an emergency, visit FoodSafety.gov [3].

Cooking

Alternative cooking sources in times of emergency including candle warmers, chafing dishes, fondue pots or a fireplace.

Charcoal grills and camp stoves are for outdoor use only.

Commercially canned food may be eaten out of the can without warming.

**To heat food in a can:**

1. Remove the label.
2. Thoroughly wash and disinfect the can. (Use a diluted solution of one part bleach to ten parts water.)
3. Open the can before heating.

Managing Food Without Power**Be Prepared:**

- Have a refrigerator thermometer.
- Know where you can get dry ice.
- Keep a few days' worth of ready-to-eat foods on hand that do not require cooking or cooling.

When the Power Goes Out:

- Keep the refrigerator and freezer doors closed as much as possible.
- The refrigerator will keep food cold for about 4 hours if it is unopened.
- Refrigerators should be kept at 40° F or below for proper food storage.

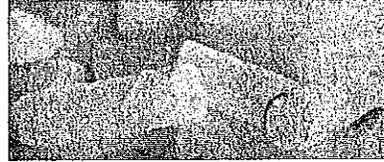
Once the Power is Restored:

- Check the temperature inside the refrigerator and freezer.

- 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. If a thermometer has not been kept in the freezer, check each package of food to determine its safety. You can't rely on appearance or odor. If the food still contains ice crystals or is 40° F or below, it is safe to refreeze or cook.
- Refrigerated food should be safe as long as the power was out for no more than 4 hours. Keep the door closed as much as possible.
- Discard any perishable food (such as meat, poultry, fish, eggs or leftovers) that has been above 40° F for two hours or more.

Using Dry Ice:

- Under normal circumstances you should not keep dry ice in your freezer. If your freezer is functioning properly it will cause the unit to become too cold and your freezer may shut off. However, if you lose power for an extended period of time, dry ice is the best way to keep things cold.
- Twenty-five pounds of dry ice will keep a 10-cubic-foot freezer below freezing for 3-4 days.
- If you use dry ice to keep your food cold, make sure it does not come in direct contact with the food.
- Use care when handling dry ice, wear dry, heavy gloves to avoid injury.



Last updated: 04/05/2014 - 06:15 AM

Source URL: <http://www.ready.gov/food>

Links

- [1] <http://www.fema.gov/media-library/assets/documents/90354>
- [2] <http://www.ready.gov/make-a-plan>
- [3] <http://www.foodsafety.gov>



KIT STORAGE LOCATIONS

Since you do not know where you will be when an emergency occurs, prepare supplies for home, work and vehicles.

HOME

Your disaster supplies kit should contain essential food, water and supplies for at least three days.

Keep this kit in a designated place and have it ready in case you have to leave your home quickly. Make sure all family members know where the kit is kept.

Additionally, you may want to consider having supplies for sheltering for up to two weeks.

[Get more information on building a disaster supplies kit \[3\].](#)

WORK

You need to be prepared to shelter at work for at least 24 hours. Make sure you have food and water and other necessities like medicines in your kit. Also, be sure to have comfortable walking shoes at your workplace in case an evacuation requires walking long distances.

Your kit should also be in one container and ready to "grab and go" in case you are evacuated from your workplace.

[Get more information on building a workplace disaster supplies kit \[4\].](#)

VEHICLE

In case you are stranded, keep a kit of emergency supplies in your car. This kit should include:

- Jumper cables
- Flashlights and extra batteries
- First aid kit and necessary medications in case you are away from home for a prolonged time
- Food items containing protein such as nuts and energy bars; canned fruit and a portable can opener
- Water for each person and pet in your car
- AM/FM radio to listen to traffic reports and emergency messages
- Cat litter or sand for better tire traction
- Shovel
- Ice scraper
- Warm clothes, gloves, hat, sturdy boots, jacket and an extra change of clothes
- Blankets or sleeping bags

Also consider:

- A fully-charged cell phone and phone charger
- Flares or reflective triangle
- Baby formula and diapers if you have a small child

Be prepared for an emergency by keeping your gas tank full and if you find yourself stranded, be safe and stay in your car, put on your flashers, call for help and wait until it arrives.





[1]

[Recommended Supplies List \[1\] \(PDF\)](#)

Be Prepared For Emergencies While Traveling

[Get the Video Embed code or](#)
[Download the Transcript here \[2\]](#)

Links

- [1] <http://www.fema.gov/media-library/assets/documents/90354>
- [2] <http://www.fema.gov/media-library/assets/videos/77777>
- [3] <http://www.ready.gov/build-a-kit>
- [4] <http://www.ready.gov/workplace-plans>