

## **Food Safety and Power Outages: During and After**

### **When the Power Goes Out . . .**

Here are basic tips for keeping food safe:

- Keep the **refrigerator and freezer doors closed** as much as possible to maintain the cold temperature.
  - The **refrigerator** will keep food **cold for about 4 hours** if it is unopened.
  - A **full freezer** will keep the temperature for approximately **48 hours** if the door remains closed.
  - A **half- full freezer** will keep the temperature for approximately **24 hours** if the door remains closed.

### **When the Power Comes Back...**

Here are basic tips for food to discard and food that can be saved. Use common sense and remember the saying: *"if in doubt, throw it out!"*

#### **IN THE FRIDGE : Foods to discard, after four hours without power:**

Dairy, meats, deli items, soft cheeses, eggs, leftovers, cut fruits and vegetables, packaged lettuce and other greens.

#### **Foods that can be saved:**

- Jellies, jams, peanut butter, relishes, olives and pickles
- Condiments including Worcestershire, soy and barbecue sauces, ketchup, mustard
- Opened vinegar-based dressings (discard creamy-based dressings and open mayo)
- Hard cheeses including cheddar, Swiss, and processed cheeses
- Butter and margarine
- Whole raw fruits and vegetables (but not pre-washed and packaged greens)

#### **IN THE FREEZER: Frozen foods can be saved and re-frozen if:**

- Appliance thermometer inside the freezer still reads 40 degrees or below
- If the food in the freezer still contains ice crystals or is at 40 degrees or below when probed with an instant-read thermometer
- A food is still frozen in the center and ice cubes haven't melted.