

Livingston County Public Health Department

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Power Outage Guidelines

The loss of mechanical refrigeration can adversely affect the quality and wholesomeness or effectiveness of food and perishable drugs. Assess the temperature of the products, the length of time the product has been exposed to improper temperatures, and the nature of the product. If the length of time exposure to improper temperatures cannot be determined, the product shall be destroyed.

The following may help you assess the situation:

1. Frozen foods which are still frozen (solid) may be sold.
2. Foods intended to be sold in a frozen state, but still an internal temperature of less than 41° and greater than 0°F may be immediately sold as a thawed, salvaged food item. Ice cream, frozen novelties, and other frozen items which lose product characteristics once thawed should be destroyed.
3. Potentially hazardous foods (PHF) or items with manufacturer's direction to keep the product at refrigerated temperatures are difficult items to assess as to a definitive temperature above which destruction is necessary. The time-temperature-product nature must be taken into consideration. PHF items found at internal temperatures above 41° F for longer than four (4) hours shall be destroyed. If you are unable to determine how long the product was at an internal temperature of greater than 41°F, it shall be destroyed.
4. Drugs or medical devices notes at temperatures above the manufacturer's recommendations shall be destroyed.

Contact the Environmental Health Division of the Livingston County Public Health Department at 815/844-7174, ext. 216 if you have any questions regarding the use or destruction of any food or drugs.