



12 Months of Preparedness



October Newsletter

MAKE A PLAN

During this fall season, continue your preparedness plan or if new to the program begin with this month's activity and information. These three simple steps will prepare you to respond to potential natural disasters or terrorist attacks: **make a plan, start a kit and be informed.**

A buddy system and backup is important for individuals living alone. Please assist a neighbor or friend with their preparedness plan for evacuation or sheltering.

CONTINUE TO BUILD A "GO KIT & STAY KIT"

The "*Items for October*" include a manual can opener, utensils, disposable cups, plates, silverware, refrigerator/freezer thermometer, storage containers and bags/clips/ties to secure opened food packages. Include any additional items that you may need.

BE INFORMED

A Power Outage and Food Safety

Please refer to the July newsletter for information on turning off power sources in your home, if directed to do so from community leaders. Turning off the electricity may help to prevent power surges when electricity is restored. After the power is restored, knowing how to determine if food is safe and how to keep food safe will help minimize the potential loss of food and reduce the risk of food borne illness.

Simple food safety precautions to follow after a disaster or emergency

Make sure you have appliance thermometers in your refrigerator and freezer. Always keep meat, poultry, fish, and eggs refrigerated at or below 40 degrees F and frozen food at or below 0 degrees F. This may be difficult when the power is out.

Keep the refrigerator and freezer doors closed as much as possible to keep the cold temperature. The refrigerator will keep food safely cold for about 4 hours if it is unopened. A full freezer will hold the temperature for approximately 48 hours (24 hours if

it is half full) if the door remains closed. Obtain dry or block ice to keep your refrigerator as cold as possible if the power is going to be out for a prolonged period of time. Fifty pounds of dry ice should hold an 18-cubic foot full freezer for 2 days. Plan ahead and know where dry ice can be purchased.

Dispose of perishables that have been above 40 degrees F for 2 hours or more; if food is thawed but still contains crystals or is 40 degrees F. or below, it can be refrozen. Keeping a thermometer in the freezer and refrigerator will help to determine if the food is safe.

If you plan to eat 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 food borne bacteria that may be present is destroyed. If at any point the food was above 40 degrees F. for 2 hours or more discard it.

There are several websites with excellent information related to keeping food safe during and after an emergency. They are:

<http://www.fda.gov/Food/ResourcesForYou/Consumers/ucm076881.htm>

For additional information regarding electric outages and gas emergencies:

http://www.we-energies.com/outages_safety/reporting/index.htm

How to be safe around power lines

http://www.we-energies.com/outages_safety/reporting/powerlines.htm

Tree trimming, safe landscaping around power lines

http://www.we-energies.com/outages_safety/digging_trees_landscaping/index.htm