

State and Local Officials Encourage Food Safety Precautions with Power Outages in North Carolina

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Raleigh, N.C. – State and local officials are encouraging people to follow food safety recommendations with power outages in the eastern and central parts of North Carolina.

Consuming spoiled food can cause illness. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) recommends the following precautions to keep food fresh during a power outage:

- Keep refrigerator and freezer doors closed as much as possible to keep in the cool air.
- Put a block of ice in refrigerator(s) if power is expected to be out for more than four hours to keep food cool longer. Wear heavy gloves when handling the ice.
- Even if partially thawed, it is safe to cook or refreeze frozen food as long there are visible ice crystals or if the food is 40 degrees or colder.

According to the CDC, a fully stocked freezer without power can keep food safe for 48 hours, while a half-full freezer will preserve food for 24 hours.

Food that has a strange smell, color or texture should be thrown out, and any typically refrigerated items that have been warmer than 40 degrees for two hours or longer should also be tossed. This includes meat, eggs, fish, poultry and leftovers.

Officials recommend cleaning off canned food that comes into contact with floodwater and stormwater to ensure germs are removed from the outside of the cans. Canned food should be thrown away if open, damaged or bulging.

For more food safety information, people should contact their local health departments. The statewide information line, 2-1-1, can provide callers with nearby shelter, housing and other Hurricane Matthew-related details.

For more information, go to ReadyNC.org or download the free ReadyNC app.

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