Power Return Checklist:

- Discard any food that you are not 100% certain is safe. Keep a record of your discarded items for your insurance company.
- Throw away any suspect food items, according to the guidelines in this brochure. Carefully check the condition of your stock. If you are unsure how long the power was out, discard potentially hazardous foods.
- If you have an on-site water supply, ensure your water is safe. If you have a well with a chlorination system, check that your system is running; the chlorination unit may need priming. Check the chlorine residual to ensure your water system is functioning correctly.
- Clean and sanitize the facility and any equipment left out when the power failed. Make sure all cleaning and sanitizing steps are taken!
- Clean and sanitize the ice machine. Do not reconnect it until your water source is safe.
- Make sure that you are ready to open. Make new plans for the next power outage while the lessons are fresh in your mind. Train staff on new procedures.
- **Contact your local health department if you have any questions about your facility being ready to reopen.**

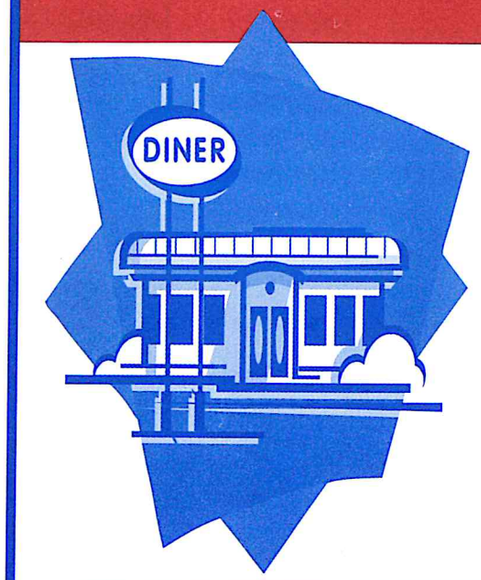
For more information contact your local health department

AWARE PREPARE
KNOWLEDGE IS POWER.

State of New York
George E. Pataki, Governor
New York State Department of Health
Antonia C. Novello, M.D., M.P.H., Dr.P.H., Commissioner

7082 8/05

When the POWER goes OUT



A Guide for FOOD OPERATORS

A Power Outage Can:

- Hurt your business
- Cause inventory losses
- Disrupt normal routines
- Cause health problems for your customers

During a prolonged outage, follow these guidelines to either store or discard items.

Bacteria grow readily at temperatures above 41°F/5°C in many foods, and can make customers ill. The foods that can cause illness if not stored below 41°F/5°C, are considered **Potentially Hazardous Foods.**

Potentially Hazardous Foods

- Meat, poultry, seafood
- Cold cuts, hot dogs
- Eggs
- Cream, sour cream, yogurt, milk
- Custards, puddings
- Soft cheeses, shredded cheeses, low-fat cheeses
- Cooked vegetables, cooked potatoes, potato salad
- Cut fresh fruits
- Cooked pasta, rice, pasta salads
- Casseroles
- Unbaked cookie and bread dough
- Gravy
- Creamy salad dressings, fish sauces, hoisin sauce, opened spaghetti sauce
- Garlic in oil

These **Potentially Hazardous Foods,** if not maintained at the proper temperature, must be discarded. See the tables for information on preserving refrigerated food, frozen food and hot food in service.

"Safe" Foods

Some food items are safe to use or sell, even if held above 41˚ F/5˚C. These include:

Safe Foods
• Bread, rolls, cakes, muffins, bagels, pancakes, waffles • Hard and processed cheese that are well wrapped, grated parmesan and romano cheeses • Fresh vegetables • Uncut fresh fruit • Peanut butter, jams and jelly • Relish, mustard, ketchup, olives • Margarine • Taco, barbecue and soy sauce • Vinegar based salad dressings • Herbs, spices

Ice Machines, Coffee Brewers, etc.:

- Disconnect your ice machine and other appliances with direct water connections to prevent potential contamination from untreated water if you have an onsite water supply or have been notified that your public water supply is unsafe.
- Use the ice you have to chill products.
- Don't store food or drink items in the ice machine. Food particles can easily contaminate your ice machine. Remove ice to a cooler or other container.

Food Temperature Checklists

HOT FOOD IN SERVICE:

Hot Food Temperatures		
Hot Above 135˚F/ 57˚C	135˚F -120˚ F / 57˚C – 49˚C	120˚F/ 49˚C and below
Okay to use or sell	Cool to 70˚ F/21˚C within 2 hours.... ....and then cool down to less than 41˚F/ 5˚C within an additional 4 hours... ...or discard	Do not use – discard

- Stop preparation of food items immediately if the power goes out.
- Keep hot foods already in service above 135˚F/57˚C.
- Do not put hot items in a non-working cooler. The hot items will not cool and the items in the cooler will get warmer. Cool with ice or by other means.

REFRIGERATED FOOD:

Refrigerated Food Temperatures		
Below 41˚F/ 5˚C	Above 41˚F /5˚C for less than 2 hours	Above 41˚F/ 5˚C over 2 hours or for unknown time
Okay to use or sell	Cool to less than 41˚F/ 5˚C within 2 hours	Discard Potentially Hazardous Foods

- Minimize opening and closing the refrigerator doors. Each time you open the door, the temperature in the cooler goes up.
- Place ice or reusable ice packs near the food.
- Do not allow standing water from melted ice to accumulate, as this may become a health hazard. Drain water from melted ice.
- Dry ice requires special handling precautions. ***See our "Using Dry Ice" fact sheet.***

FROZEN FOOD:

Frozen Food Temperatures		
Thawed, with ice crystals	Thawed completely below 41˚F/ 5˚C	Thawed above 41˚F/ 5˚C
Okay to use or sell Okay to refreeze	Okay to use immediately Do not refreeze	Do not use – discard

- Keep freezer doors closed. Food in an unopened freezer should be safe for a day.
- Preserve frozen foods longer by using dry ice ***(see the "Using Dry Ice" fact sheet for specific tips).***
- Refreezing partially thawed food may affect food texture and quality.