



News from the Ulster County Department of Health

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Post-Tropical Storm Irene Food Safety

Ulster County residents should be careful not to consume foods that have been exposed or damaged during Tropical Storm Irene. Residents are urged to use the following guidelines when assessing all food stored during power outages or that may have been exposed to storm water:

- Refrigerators will only keep foods appropriately cold for about **4 hours** without power if it is unopened.
- Thawed foods can be eaten if they are 'refrigerator cold' or re-frozen and still contain ice crystals.
- Do not refreeze thoroughly thawed foods.
- Discard any food that has been at temperatures greater than 40 degrees for 2 hours or more.
- Discard refrigerated perishable food such as meat, poultry, fish, soft cheeses, milk, eggs, leftovers, and deli items after **4 hours** without power.
- After a freezer is opened, and if the temperature of the food is above 40 degrees, use immediately or discard.
- Wash and sanitize (using a teaspoon of household bleach to one gallon of water) cans of food that have been exposed to rain water.
- In general, floodwaters are considered contaminated and if any food (including food stored in plastic, cardboard or paper containers, or canned goods) have been submerged in floodwaters, they should be discarded.
- Discard any food that has an unusual odor, color or texture.

When in Doubt, Throw it Out!

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