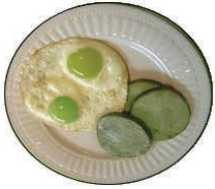




Emergency Preparedness Pointers

How to Treat Your Holiday Treats



It is that time of year when food and leftovers seem to be in abundance. As we enjoy these holiday delights we must remember that proper food handling will keep us “merry” while improper food handling could leave us “dreary.”

One of the most important steps in avoiding food borne illness is to ensure that foods are cooked thoroughly to the appropriate internal temperatures. Using a meat thermometer can help ensure that these temperatures are reached. Here are the rules provided by the Food and Drug Administration:



- 145 ° F — For Beef, Lamb and Veal
- 160 ° F — Ground meats (beef, pork veal, lamb),
Pork (chops, ribs, roasts) and egg dishes
- 165 ° F — Ground turkey, chicken, stuffing, casseroles
and leftovers
- 170 ° F — Chicken and turkey (breasts)
- 180 ° F — Chicken and turkey (whole birds, legs, thighs and wings).



Following a meal, refrigerate or freeze perishables, prepared food, and leftovers within 2 hours. Place your leftovers into shallow containers for rapid cooling. Your refrigerator should be kept at 40 °F or below and your freezer at 0 °F or below.

What if a storm causes a power outage?

If the doors are left closed, your refrigerator should maintain a temperature of 40 ° F or lower for about 4 hours. Beyond 4 hours, the food should be kept cold with ice. Once power is restored, any frozen foods that still have ice crystals on them can be safely refrozen. Any food that has been above 40 ° F for 2 hours or more should be discarded.

Give a 72 hour Kit Present

If you have not prepared a 72 hour Kit for your home, it would make a great holiday present to yourself and provide peace of mind. For information on building a kit go to:

<http://www.accem.org/pointers/eppnov06.pdf>



If you have a kit, give your kit a present of fresh canned goods. Many canned foods can be used in preparing holiday meals, so this can be a good time of year to rotate the stock in your 72 hour Kit. Canned foods and other shelf-stable products need to be stored in a cool, dry place. Your 72 hour kit should not be stored under the sink, in a damp garage or basement, or any place exposed to high or low temperature extremes. Canned high-acid foods, such as tomatoes and other fruit, can be stored up to 18 months. Low-acid foods, such as meat and vegetables, can be kept 2 to 5 years. Do not eat food from containers that are: leaking, bulging, rusting, badly dented or have a foul odor. These items could contain an extremely rare, potentially fatal toxin produced by the bacterium *Clostridium botulinum*. Be prepared, stay informed and have a happy, healthy holiday season.

