

# REFRIGERATION

- Check the temperature of your fridge and freezer. Are they cold enough?
  - Set refrigerators at or below 4°C (40°F). Use a refrigerator thermometer to check the temperature. The closer to 0°C (0°F) the fridge temperature is without freezing food items, the better.
  - Keep freezers at or below -18°C (0°F). Use a freezer thermometer to check the temperature.
  - Turn the refrigerator or freezer control to its coldest setting.
- Make sure raw meat, poultry or fish are wrapped very well and placed in the coldest section of your refrigerator.
- If there is space in your freezer, fill containers such as empty milk cartons with water and freeze. The blocks of ice will help maintain temperatures during a power outage.
- Have a cooler with ice ready ahead of time to keep refrigerated food cold if you know or think the power may be out for more than 4 hours.
- Do not open the refrigerator or freezer door unless absolutely necessary in order to maintain the cold temperature.
  - A full freezer will keep food frozen for about 48 hours. A freezer that is half full will keep food frozen for about 24 hours.
  - An unopened refrigerator will keep food cold for about 4 hours.
- If possible, add ice to the refrigerator to keep the food at a safe temperature if the power will be out for long periods of time.
- Discard any thawed food that has been above 4°C (40°F) for more than 2 hours, and any food that has an obvious unusual colour or odour. Keep in mind that food contaminated with bacteria does not necessarily smell bad or appear spoiled.
- If your power has been out for 24 hours, refrigerated food must be discarded, after 48 hours, freezer food must be discarded.
- Remember to clean and sanitize appliances or any areas the spoiled food has touched after discarding.
- Food that still contains ice crystals or feels refrigerator-cold can be re-frozen.

## When in doubt, throw it out!

The following food items are often associated with food borne illness and should be discarded if stored above 4°C (40°F) for more than 2 hours:

- raw or cooked meat, poultry, seafood and
- luncheon meats
- casseroles, stews or soups
- milk and soft cheeses
- homemade mayonnaise or dressings
- cooked pasta, potatoes or rice
- salads made with any of these foods

Examples of food items which can be stored above 4°C (40°F) for several days include:

- butter and margarine
- hard or processed cheese
- fresh fruits and vegetables
- mustard, ketchup, olives
- salad dressings, peanut butter, barbeque sauce
- jams and jellies

## Hand Sanitizer and Disinfectant

- Have hand sanitizer and disinfectant wipes ready to use in case of a power outage.
- When using disinfectant wipes, it is important to read the label and follow all manufacturer's instructions.
- Use the pre-mixed food safe sanitizer on counters where food is handled/prepared during a power outage. Try to limit food handling as much as possible.
- Use hand sanitizer after using the washroom.
- Pre-mix a food safe sanitizer to use on counters using household bleach. Mix approximately 2 ml of bleach (5.7%) with 1 litre of water. Store under the kitchen sink.

