



Guidelines for Foodservice Establishments to Safely Reopen after a Power Outage

An extended power outage is one that lasts for four hours or longer and puts the establishment's ability to operate in accordance with Connecticut Public Health Code Section 19-13-B42 at risk, especially with regard to maintaining safe internal temperatures of 135°F or above or 41°F or below of foods that must be refrigerated or hot held (Time/Temperature Control for Safety [TCS], formally known as Potential Hazards Food [PHF]). Other concerns include the ability to wash, rinse, and sanitize food contact equipment and surfaces, availability of approved water, whether equipment to prepare food is working properly, adequate lighting, etc. Check with your local health department regarding specific re-opening/operating requirements.

When there is a power outage, the foodservice establishment must follow the rules set by the local health department, which will likely include closing until approved to reopen. Typically, the requirements will include (but are not limited to) the following:

- Report the power outage at your establishment to the local health department.
- Know the time the outage happened and how long the establishment was without power.
- Monitor the temperatures of refrigerated and/or frozen food products in the establishment.
- Voluntarily destroy TCS foods that have not be held at the proper temperatures (noted above) for more than 2 hours.
 - Do not use/serve these foods even if cooked or reheated.
- Clean and sanitize all food contact surfaces and equipment that may have become contaminated during the storm
- DO NOT connect portable generators to equipment or begin using an alternate water source before getting approval from the local health department.
- Purchase fresh food only after power has been restored **AND** equipment has returned to proper temperatures. Have invoices for new stock available for review by the local health department.
- Know if the establishment's water supply was compromised by the outage and follow local and state health department guidance.
- Check that all equipment used for cooking and holding hot foods is working properly before beginning to prepare food again.

Remember:

**Improper holding and cooking temperatures
are the most common causes of foodborne illness!**

**Follow the guidance from your local health department
to keep your customers and employees safe.**