



Eastern Highlands Health District

4 South Eagleville Road • Mansfield CT 06268 • Tel: (860) 429-3325 • Fax: (860) 429-3321 • Web: [www.EHHD.org](http://www.EHHD.org)

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## For Immediate Release

### *Eastern Highlands Health District urges residents to protect health during recovery from Winter Storm Alfred*

Residents cautioned about food & water safety, and other environmental health issues during and after power outages.

Mansfield - In response to recent winter storm impacts and power outages, the Eastern Highlands Health District (EHHD) is advising area residents to take precautions to protect themselves after this event.

“Power outages from a major storm event can have a devastating impact on the fundamental needs of individuals. Issues that we typically take for granted such as safe food, safe drinking water, and adequate shelter suddenly become an immediate priority,” stated EHHD Director of Health Robert Miller, MPH, R.S. “Certain precautions are necessary to protect yourself from unsafe food, water, and other environmental conditions during storm recovery.”

The Eastern Highlands Health District is providing the following information to help residents stay safe and healthy as they manage the aftermath of winter storm Alfred:

#### **Power Outages and Food Safety**

If your home is served by a private well, sump pump, and/or sewage pump, these items will likely be non-functional. Make sure to have at least 1 gallon per person per day of fresh, sealed water for drinking and personal needs.

Ensure all refrigerators and freezers are kept closed. A tightly shut refrigerator can keep the food at or below 45° F for about 4 hours and a freezer can keep food frozen for up to 2 days (if fully stocked). Any frozen food that thaws but remains at less than 45° F can be cooked and eaten. Food above 45° F should be thrown out. In general: don't re-freeze frozen food if it has been thawed.

Be especially careful with eggs and egg products, milk and milk products, meat, fish, poultry and shellfish. If you have any doubt concerning food items, they should be discarded - remember -when in doubt, throw it out!

#### **Danger of Carbon Monoxide Poisoning**

Don't use charcoal grills indoors for heating and cooking, and don't use gas stoves as a source of heat. Either one can lead to carbon monoxide poisoning. A fireplace is safe to use for heat and cooking if it is properly vented to the outside. In addition, check to see if water or a power outage has affected your furnace and assure that it is venting properly and the pilot light is on. And, never place gasoline generators indoors.



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When using a kerosene heater in your home, follow the manufacture's instructions carefully. General precautions include: Never refill the fuel in a heater inside your home, never use gasoline in a kerosene heater, and keep the heater at least 3 feet away from furniture, drapes, and clothing. Additional information from the Consumer Product Safety Commission about using a kerosene heater safely can be found on the EHHD website at [www.ehhd.org](http://www.ehhd.org)

### **Shelters and Access to Warming Stations & Clean Water**

Local shelters are available throughout the health district service area, and many towns have established additional locations as warming & power-charging stations. For the most up-to-date information, residents should check the EHHD website, call their local town hall, or call 2-1-1 for the location of shelters and resources available in their area.

For more information on recovering from the winter storm, contact Eastern Highlands Health District at 860-429-3325, or go to our website at [www.ehhd.org](http://www.ehhd.org).