

Guidelines for Foodservice Establishments to Safely Reopen after a Power Outage

Foodservice establishments are reminded that **they must** report extended power outages to Ledge Light Health District (LLHD). **An extended power outage 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 keeping possible unsafe foods at safe internal temperatures of 140°F or above or 45°F or below.** 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. LLHD will likely inspect the food establishment before allowing it to reopen and operate.

When there is a power outage, the foodservice establishment should follow the rules set by LLHD, which will 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 LLHD (contact info below).
- 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.
- Know whether or not perishable food items have been in the danger zone (above 45°F or below 140°F) for more than 2 hours. **Refrigerators last about 2 hours and full freezers about 48 hours without power.**
- Voluntarily destroy perishable food products that have been in the danger zone for more than 2 hours.
- Do not use/serve foods that have been in the danger zone for more than 2 hours even if you cook or reheat them.
- Wash, rinse and sanitize all food contact surfaces that came in contact with any unsafe foods (foods that were in the danger zone for 2 hours or more).
- DO NOT connect portable generators to equipment or begin using an alternate water source before getting approval from LLHD.
- 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 LLHD.
- Know if the establishment's water supply was compromised by the outage and follow local and state health department guidance (give us a call).
- Check that all equipment used for cooking and holding hot foods is working properly before beginning to prepare food again.

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