



NEWS RELEASE

ALABAMA DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC HEALTH

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Ensure the safety of your food after Hurricane Ivan

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Power outages associated with Hurricane Ivan have prompted concerns about the safety of frozen and refrigerated foods. The Alabama Department of Public Health advises that as a general rule, a full upright or chest freezer will keep foods frozen for about two days without power.

A partially full freezer will keep foods frozen for about one day. This time may be extended by keeping the door shut. A refrigerator will keep foods cool for four to six hours if the door is kept shut as much as possible.

Any thawed foods that have been at room temperature for more than two hours should be discarded. Foods still containing ice crystals can be refrozen, although the quality of the food may decrease. Foods that have thawed to refrigerator temperatures (that is, no more than 40 degrees Fahrenheit) can also be cooked and then refrozen.

For specific questions about a food or refrigeration condition, contact either your local county health department or the Food Safety and Inspection Service's Meat and Poultry Hotline at 1-800-535-4555 or 888-MP-HOTLINE (888-674-6854).

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