



Department of Health

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Health Department Advises About Food Safety after Power Outage

BREWSTER, NY—When the power goes out and stays out for a period of time, the Putnam County Department of Health cautions residents to check food left in refrigerators and freezers. Bacteria can easily grow in many foods at temperatures above 41 degrees Fahrenheit and make people ill. Here are some general guidelines from the NYS Department of Health:

- Foods such as eggs, milk, meats, chicken, seafood, cooked leftovers, gravies, soups, or products with these ingredients, **must be discarded if temperatures exceeded 41 degrees Fahrenheit for more than 2 hours.**
- Other foods such as fruits, vegetables, juices, cheeses and condiments, may be stored above 41 degrees Fahrenheit for an extended time. Check appearance, odor, texture and color before eating.
- For frozen foods, if the freezer thermometer reads 40° F or below, the food is safe and may be refrozen. (If there is no thermometer in the freezer, check each package of food to determine its safety. Don't rely on appearance or odor. If the food still contains ice crystals, it is safe to refreeze or cook.) Refreezing may cause a loss in nutrition, taste or quality.
- **Frozen foods that have completely thawed and have been warmed to temperatures above 41 degrees Fahrenheit should be discarded.**
- **The motto to remember is: "WHEN IN DOUBT, THROW IT OUT."**

The Health Department has been making site visits to area restaurants and other food service businesses to ensure the safety of foods offered at these establishments.

Residents can visit www.fda.gov for more information about food safety following a power outage, or they can call the Health Department at 845-808-1390.

The mission of the Putnam County Department of Health, nationally accredited by the Public Health Accreditation Board (PHAB), is to improve and protect the health of the Putnam County community, composed of nearly 100,000 residents. Core services include community health

assessment, disease surveillance and control, emergency preparedness, environmental health protection, family health promotion and health education. For more information, please visit our County website at www.putnamcountyny.com ; or visit our social media sites on Facebook at www.facebook.com/putnamhealth and Twitter @PutnamHealthNY.

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