

Emergency Action Plan for Interruption of Electrical Service

Name of Establishment

You may already have an emergency plan to address power outages or a major loss of refrigeration. But in case you do not have a written plan, we have developed the following sample plan with guidance from the Massachusetts Food Protection Program.

This plan is designed to keep your customers safe during and after an event when you lose power. The plan may help you minimize losses of product during an event, and may also help you document the event in a way that can help you re-coup some losses from your insurance company.

In the event of an emergency involving electrical service interruption an assessment of a number of factors is required to determine if you can keep your establishment open. These factors include:

- The complexity and scope of food operations,
- The duration of the emergency event,
- The impact on other critical infrastructure and services (example: water supply), and
- The availability of alternative procedures that can be used to meet the requirements of the Food Code

There will be situations where staying open will not be an option.

In the event of a long term interruption in electrical service (2 hours or longer) one person in charge must be designated to oversee all food safety procedures to ensure that the emergency action plan is followed and that all documentation is maintained as required by that plan. In the event of a shift change, an alternate person in charge must be appointed. **It is the responsibility of the designated person in charge to conduct the initial and the ongoing assessment to ensure the consistent compliance with food safety requirements.**

Person in Charge: _____ Business Fax Number: _____

Business Phone Number: _____ Business Email Address: _____

Emergency (after hours) phone: _____ Establishment has generator: Yes No

In the event of a power outage, I agree to follow the procedures outlined in the attached Emergency Action Plan*. If safe operations cannot be assured, we agree to close the food establishment and notify the Health Department at 508-945-5165.

Owner

Date

Please fill in the above information, then review and initial each page indicating that you have read and agree with the Emergency Action Plan. Please return a copy of the plan including any attachments to the Health Department and keep your copy of the plan on site in a safe, easily accessible location.

***If you have prepared your own emergency action plan, please submit it to the Health department for review, in lieu of the plan attached.**

Building Blocks to help you Plan Ahead:

Power outages are the most frequent type of manmade disasters. Statistics indicate that the average power outage lasts four hours, but could last for days. The August 2003 power outage disaster affecting large areas in the northeastern part of the country lasted four days.

1. Consider access to an electrical generator to be used in emergencies. Make certain that the generator has the capacity to operate critical pieces of equipment such as refrigeration and freezer units, pumps, safety lighting, hot water heaters, etc. Make certain that individuals are trained to operate the equipment safely. Advise the utility company that you are using a generator as a safety precaution for their employees.
2. Consider securing access to a refrigerated truck that can be delivered to the site during an emergency.
3. Consider securing access to a refrigerated warehouse that has a back-up generator to which you can bring food needing refrigeration in insulated containers.
4. Prepare an "emergency menu" in advance including recipes for food items that do not require cooking since the ventilation system will no longer remove smoke, steam, grease laden air, etc.
5. Develop a plan for minimizing loss of food product held under refrigeration. Opening refrigeration equipment doors will cause the food to warm more quickly. What is your strategy for loss prevention?
6. If you plan to use ice to keep food cold, where will you obtain ice when ice is in high demand by the general population?
7. Dry ice should not be used in enclosed spaces (i.e. walk-in cooler) because of the potential build-up of carbon dioxide.
8. Heating, air conditioning, security systems, computers, cash registers, lighting, and other systems may not operate. Develop a plan for coping with these problems.
9. Maintain contact information for people that can help you such as the utility company, garbage hauling service, ice supplier, refrigerated truck company, food warehouse, septic tank pumping service, local health department, emergency broadcast station frequency numbers, etc.
10. Develop a list of equipment that uses electricity in your establishment and develop a contingency plan that describes what you would do if electrical service is interrupted.
11. Use the Emergency Action Plan as a guide to help describe the steps that you would take in your own establishment.
12. Develop a plan for communicating with key people in your organization. Keep a list of emergency contact numbers with you at all times.
13. Consider the purchase of a phone that plugs into a jack vs. one that depends on electricity for operation.
14. Utilize a service such as Nextel that can provide continuous service in the event of a power outage.
15. Plan how important documents and other information will be communicated without the use of computers and fax machines.

Emergency Action Plan for Interruption of Electrical Service

Name of Establishment

The person-in-charge will:

1. Note the date and time of the interruption in electrical service
2. Assess the affected operations and either close the establishment or continue operating using modified procedures. Either option follows this Emergency Action Plan.
3. Immediately notify the Chatham Health Department, with the following information
 - a. Whether the establishment is open for service- or not.
 - b. If closed; note when the operation closed in relation to the power outage
4. In a widespread event when contact with the regulatory agency is not possible, the establishment will document 1-3 above to report to the Health Department at a later time.
5. Oversee monitoring and recording of temps for all phf's held in refrigeration, freezers and hot holding units.

Section I: Cooking and holding of food at proper temperature. This section must be followed whether the establishment remains open or is closed during the power outage

Refrigeration- The lack of adequate refrigeration may result in the growth of pathogenic or disease causing organisms and toxins in foods that require temperature control for safety (Potentially Hazardous Foods).

- ✓ Food temperatures will be monitored and recorded a minimum of every 2 hours. Items listed below will aid in keeping refrigeration at proper temperatures.
- ✓ Keep refrigeration equipment doors closed
 - Pack potentially hazardous food in commercially made ice or dry ice (Dry ice must not be used in enclosed spaces (i.e. walk-in) because of the potential build-up of carbon dioxide.)
 - Do not put hot food in refrigeration equipment!
- ✓ Any food product that is no longer safe for consumption will be discarded by the person in charge using the guidelines in the following chart, and any discarded food must be documented with name, and approximate amount. Photos may be used in conjunction with written documentation.
- ✓ When power is restored, the following table must be used as a guide for handling potentially hazardous food (PHF) stored in refrigeration units that may have lost power. **When in doubt, throw it out!**

Cold Food Temperature Guidance			
Time	42-45°F	46-50°F	51°F or above
0-2 Hours	PHF can be sold	Immediately cool PHF to 41°F or below within 2 hours	PHF cannot be sold. Destroy the food
2-3	Immediately cool PHF to 41°F or below within 2 hours	Immediately cool PHF to 41°F or below within 1 hour	PHF cannot be sold. Destroy the food
4	Immediately cool PHF to 41°F or below within 1 hour	PHF cannot be sold. Destroy the food	
5+	PHF cannot be sold. Destroy the food		

Frozen foods:

- ✓ Any foods that have packaging that shows evidence of thawing such as weeping, stains, physical depreciation, evaporation, or container damage will be used immediately or discarded.
- ✓ Any foods that remain solid or semi-solid will be immediately refrozen.

Hot Food Holding

Hot holding equipment that is no longer functional may result in unsafe temperatures that allow for the growth of pathogens.

Alternative Procedures:

- ✓ All potentially hazardous food will be discarded after 4 hours from being removed from temperature control (below 140° F)
- ✓ An alternate source of heat will be used and the food temperatures will be monitored hourly. Please describe (ex. Canned heat)
- ✓ If power returns within 4 hours, food will be re-heated to 165° F.

Cooking Equipment

Cooking equipment that is no longer functional may result in inadequate cooking processes that permit the survival and growth of pathogens.

Alternative Procedures:

- ✓ All foods in the middle of the cooking process will be evaluated for time and temperature to determine if foods should be discarded. Any foods that were in the cooking or re-heating process but did not reach the proper minimum temperature must be discarded.
- ✓ Discontinue cooking operations **and turn off equipment.**

Section II: When an operation remains open for a power outage:

Menu

- In the event of a power outage, cooking and hot and cold holding facilities may be extremely limited. Please list what equipment would and would not be available for the safe preparation of food, what types of menu items may still be safely provided to the public etc.
- equipment: _____
- menu: _____

Ventilation

- Inadequate mechanical ventilation may result in a build-up of cooking smoke, heat, steam, grease laden air, etc.
- All cooking operations requiring ventilation must be discontinued and all equipment will be shut off.

Lighting

- The lack of artificial illumination may negatively impact personal safety, food preparation, food handling, cleaning of equipment/utensils, premises, etc.
- Limit operation to daylight hours. Restrict operations to those that can be safely conducted in available natural light.
- Provide lighting using other power sources (i.e. battery operated lantern, flashlight etc. if fire codes allow). Limit operation to those procedures that can be safely conducted using alternative lighting.

Dishwashing Equipment

- Equipment for cleaning and sanitizing utensils may no longer be operational and may result in contamination of food contact surfaces.
- A three compartment sink with a proper wash, rinse and sanitize procedure will be used if hot water is still available.
- Only Single Service tableware will be used.

Electric Hot Water Heater

- Electric hot water heaters will no longer function resulting in an interruption of hot water for effective ware washing and hand washing.
- Heat water on a gas cooking appliance for use in 3 bay sink for washing and sanitizing.

Sewage Disposal

Sewage ejector pump(s), and pump chambers that no longer function may result in sewage overflow and backups.

Alternative Procedures if establishment has been identified as having a sewage ejector pump or pump chamber:

- Discontinue all operations. Contact the local health department for possible options.
- Call a septic hauler for pumping as necessary to keep up with demand.

Please identify if establishment has:

- a pump chamber
- sewage ejector pump
- other septic component that requires electricity

Section III: Power Restored

- ✓ **If a food establishment was ordered or required to cease operations by the Health Department, it shall not re-open until authorization has been granted by the Health Department.**

The following must be addressed before returning to normal operation when power is restored:

- ✓ Electricity, potable water, and/or gas services will be assessed to confirm that it has been fully restored
- ✓ All circuit breakers will be properly re-set as needed
- ✓ All equipment and facilities checked to make sure they are operating properly including: hot holding, ventilation, water supply, sewage pumps, hot water heaters, toilet facilities, ware washing machines and hand washing facilities.
 - All refrigeration, freezers and hot holding will continue to be monitored until it is confirmed that they are holding proper temperature for at least 2 hours (note in your log)
- ✓ Food contact surfaces, equipment and utensils will be cleaned and sanitized prior to resuming food-handling operations. This includes ice bins in ice machines where ice has melted during the interruption.
- ✓ All water lines will be flushed. Water filters shall be changed as needed.

Disposal of Food:

- ✓ Small volumes of food will be denatured (such as with bleach, a detergent or other cleaning product to render it unusable) or alternatively destroyed and placed in an outside refuse bin for removal.
- ✓ Any large volumes of food will be kept well marked in an area of refrigeration or freezer completely separated from food not to be discarded until a disposal company can be contacted for immediate transportation to a licensed landfill.