

Food Safety and Salvaging

Salvaged food **MUST BE** safe and wholesome, sound, free from contamination, labeled with all mandatory statements, inspected by local or state health department personnel before being released.

DO NOT “taste” for safety ... When in doubt, throw it out!

Even though it is unlikely that an emergency would cut off your food supply for two weeks, consider maintaining a supply that will last that long.

Make sure you have a manual can opener in your kit.

When food supplies are low:

- Reduced activity = reduced food needs; can go without food for many days. Exceptions are children and pregnant women.
- Attention to special needs.

If your water supply is limited:

- Avoid foods that are high in fat and protein,
- Don't stock salty foods,
- Eat salt-free crackers, whole grain cereals and canned foods with high liquid content.

Buy familiar foods to prepare an emergency food supply. Familiar foods are important; they can lift morale and give a feeling of security in time of stress. Canned foods won't require cooking, water or special preparation.

FEMA, American Red Cross, USDA

Determine if food is safe!

Food can become contaminated or distressed from fires, flooding, power outage, ammonia leak, chemical spills, and transportation accidents.



TYPE OF DAMAGE CONSIDERATION:



Water Damage

Water damage caused by excessive rainfall, melting snow, hurricanes, high tides, broken dams, broken pipes, activated sprinkler systems, overflow from water mains, or flooding from fire fighting operations can be either localized or extensive. All water, regardless of its source, must be considered to be a pollutant because of the possibility of overflowing sewers, pit privies, and street run-off water.



Fire Damage

Food products located in a facility damaged by fire, a determination should be made of the following:

- Exact source, extent, and location of the fire in the facility;
- Amount of smoke and heat generated by the fire;
- Type of fire, i.e., electrical, chemical, building structure, paper or a combination of types;
- Release of any toxic gases;
- Did a power outage occur and if so, how long was power lost; and
- Proximity of all potentially affected food products to the source and spread of the fire.



Ammonia Leaks

Contamination from ammonia leaks involves the absorption of ammonia fumes into the product as a result of prolonged exposure to fumes, either by direct exposure or absorption through permeable packaging.



Power Outages

The principal issues for an inspection after a power outage are time and temperature. How long was the power out, and what were the resultant temperatures? Food products under refrigeration must be kept at 41° F or below and frozen foods at 32° F or below. To determine whether temperature abuse has occurred, measure the internal temperature of the product.



Vehicle Accidents

Most product damage occurs as a result of the physical impact. However, product can also be compromised if a vehicle's refrigeration unit is damaged. As in a power outage, if product temperatures exceed 41° F, the product must be considered unsafe if out-of-temperature for an extended period. The internal temperature of the product should be monitored as often as possible while out of temperature control. Exposure to the weather may also adversely affect the product. Although illegal, toxic items traveling with the product may rupture and increase the possibility of contamination. Fuel spillage should also be a concern.

TYPE OF PACKAGING CONSIDERATION:



Perishable Products

The following types of products are not recommended for reconditioning:

- Milk products, because they are extremely perishable and highly susceptible to bacterial growth.
- Fresh fruit and produce, which have been contaminated by nonpotable water, smoke, ammonia, or chemicals, cannot be adequately cleaned.



Foods in Plastic, Paper, Cardboard, Cloth or Similar Containers

Foods packaged in these containers that have sustained water damage usually cannot be reconditioned. Foods packaged in these containers that have been exposed to minor fire and/or smoke damage may be reconditioned, if the labels are intact and contents have not been affected. Products intended for use by infants, the elderly, or infirm, as well as sterile or drug products, while possibly safe, should not be considered for reconditioning.



Screw-top, Crimped cap, and Similar Closures

Food products in containers with screw caps, snap-lids, crimped caps, twist caps, flip tops, snap open, and similar-type closures should not be reconditioned if submerged in water or subjected to smoke contamination.

- However, cans with flip tops can be sanitized with sanitizing solution. A careful examination should be made of the area under the plastic binder often used on these units.



Hermetically sealed Cans

Products in hermetically sealed cans that have been exposed to fire and smoke but not excessive heat may be cleaned and relabeled. Hermetically sealed cans exposed to non-potable water may be reconditioned and relabeled under strict, controlled procedures. These procedures include removing all labels, inspecting the cans for pinholes, washing the containers in soapy solution, rinsing the containers in potable water, buffing the cans to remove rust (excluding heavily rusted cans), disinfecting the can by immersion in not less than 100 ppm chlorine solution (*2 teaspoons of bleach per quart of water*), thorough drying, and relabeling.

PROPER DISPOSAL OF CONDEMNED GOODS:

- The first item to be completed in a disaster plan. This could include the use of approved types of incinerators, when available, or the use of sanitary landfills of both.
- Trucking arrangements should be considered.
- Workmen and security guards should be at the landfill site for proper disposal and to prevent scavenging/looting.
- Records should be kept of disposal at the place of business and at the disposal site. This should include the number of truckloads, date and point of origin.

QUICK REFERENCE CHART:

Damage Type of Food	Water	Fire <i>Toxic fumes released from burning materials; chemicals used to fight fire.</i>	Ammonia Leak <i>(CDHS) ensure safety of employees</i>	Power Outage	Vehicle Accident <i>(ISDH)</i>
Sealed metal cans	Remove labels. Thoroughly wash with soapy water, immerse in strong chlorine solution (100ppm / 1oz/gal) for 15 minutes. Dry to prevent rusting.	Those too close to the heat of the fire (charred), may no longer be safe. <i>Thoroughly wash with soapy water, immerse in strong chlorine solution</i>	While there are no current regulatory limits for the amount of ammonia in foods, the FDB strongly suggests that firms use caution in any attempt to salvage or recondition these foods.	Okay to use.	Adverse conditions: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Toxic items /janitorial supplies; • exposure to weather • food or food ingredient run-off into waterways. Move food to another vehicle and routed to appropriate destination.
Bottled Foods	Do Not Salvage, DESTROY	Do Not Salvage, DESTROY	Do Not Salvage DESTROY	Okay to use.	
Fresh fruits & vegetables	Do Not Salvage, DESTROY	Do Not Salvage, DESTROY	Do Not Salvage DESTROY	Okay to use, except for cut melons, sprouts	
Meat, poultry, fish	Do Not Salvage, DESTROY	Do Not Salvage, DESTROY	Do Not Salvage DESTROY	Product is okay if temperature does not exceed 41°F for more than 4 hours	
Lard, butter, oleo	Do Not Salvage, DESTROY	Do Not Salvage, DESTROY	Do Not Salvage DESTROY	Product is okay if temperature does not exceed 41°F for more than 4 hours	
Sugar, Coffee, tea, eggs	Do Not Salvage, DESTROY	Do Not Salvage, DESTROY	Do Not Salvage DESTROY	Eggs need to be kept at or below 45°F	
Cereals, flour, corn meal	Do Not Salvage, DESTROY	Do Not Salvage, DESTROY	Do Not Salvage DESTROY	Okay to use	
Medicine, cosmetics	DESTROY			Okay to use <i>-if not kept refrigerated</i>	

