

Emergency Food Supplies

During and after a disaster, it will be vital that you and your family (including pets) eat enough to maintain your strength. The Centers for Disease Control and the American Red Cross recommend that each family store enough food to last for at least three days or up to two weeks. You will need to have enough food on hand to eat at least one well-balanced meal each day, and more if you are working hard. If activity is significantly reduced, healthy people can survive on half their usual food intake for an extended period and without any food for many days. Food, unlike water, may be rationed safely, except children and pregnant women still need adequate nutrition.

If there is a power outage, foods stored in the refrigerator or freezer should be consumed first, then begin using your emergency food supplies. Those foods should be non-perishable and require no refrigeration, minimal preparation or cooking, and little or no water.

What to Store:

- Ready-to-eat canned foods like soups, vegetables, stews. Avoid eating from cans that are swollen, dented or corroded.
- Canned juices, powdered milk (store extra water)
- Dried fruits, nuts
- Staples like sugar, salt and pepper
- High energy foods like peanut butter, jelly, crackers, granola bars and trail mix
- Canned protein drinks, vitamin and mineral supplement tablets
- Comfort/stress foods: cookies, hard candy, sweetened cereals, instant coffee, tea bags
- Foods designed for people on special diets. Juices and soups may be helpful for ill or elderly people. Nursing mothers may need liquid formula in case they are unable to nurse.
- Canned or dry pet food for pets

Also Keep on Hand:

- Alcohol-based hand sanitizer or wipes
- Manual can opener
- Disposable cups, plates and utensils
- Utility knife
- Aluminum foil and plastic wrap
- Re-sealable plastic bags

How and Where to Store Food:

- Keep food supplies in a cool, dry place, out of the sun, if possible.
- Wrap perishable foods, such as cookies and crackers in plastic bags and keep them in sealed containers.
- Empty opened packages of sugar, dried fruits and nuts into screw-top jars or airtight canisters to keep them fresh.
- Rotate supplies and replace them frequently so they remain fresh.
- If packages do not have a use-by or expiration date on them, mark foods with a permanent marker to record date of purchase.