

## What to do if your power goes off: freezer/refrigerator guidelines

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and poultry until there's no pink in the juices when it's cut. (Cook red meat until it reaches an internal temperature of 160 degrees F; a safe internal temperature for poultry is 180 degrees F for whole poultry, 170 degrees F for poultry breasts and roasts and 165 degrees F for ground poultry.) Fish should flake with a fork when it cooked to a safe temperature.

### REFRIGERATOR GUIDELINES:

■ **REFRIGERATED ITEMS** should be safe as long as the power is out no more than about 4 to 6 hours. Discard any perishable food that has been held above 40 degrees F for over 2 hours or if the refrigerator was off more than 6 hours.

■ Leave the refrigerator door closed; every time you open it, needed cold air escapes causing the foods inside to reach unsafe temperatures.

■ If it appears the power will be off more than six hours, transfer refrigerated perishable foods to an insulated cooler filled with ice or frozen gel packs. Keep a thermometer in the cooler to be sure the food stays at 40 degrees F or below.

■ As a general guideline of whether a food is perishable—consider where it was stored at the grocery store when you bought it. If it was in the refrigerator or freezer section,

it's probably perishable and should be tossed if held above 40 degrees F for over 2 hours.

■ If the label says to "refrigerate after opening," treat it as a perishable food.

■ If you're uncertain about whether to toss a food and there's a toll-free number, call the company and ask.

■ Many foods are no longer processed with as many preservatives, sugar or salt as in the past. Unless the label says the food is safe at room temperature or the company will say the food is safe, it's best to toss if it's been above 40 degrees F over 2 hours.

■ **TOSS** the following foods if they've been held above 40 degrees F for over 2 hours. In some cases, such as ketchup and mustard, the food may still be safe, but the quality isn't as good. Some pickles and jellies may be safe; others may not be; the safest policy is to check with the company.

- ☛ meat, poultry, fish
- ☛ eggs
- ☛ cheese, milk and other dairy products
- ☛ cut, peel or bruised fruits and vegetables
- ☛ salad dressing
- ☛ mayonnaise
- ☛ pickles
- ☛ relish
- ☛ jelly, jam, etc.
- ☛ fruit and vegetable juices
- ☛ mustard, ketchup and

other condiments (mustard/ketchup may be safe but lower in quality)

☛ margarine and butter (call the company if you have questions—some forms may be safe while others should be tossed.)

■ **These foods should still be safe:**

- ☛ unpeeled, uncut fruits and vegetables without bruises
- ☛ peanut butter
- ☛ unopened cans of food (peaches, pop, etc.)
- ☛ flour
- ☛ oil, solid shortening
- ☛ bread, rolls
- ☛ coffee
- ☛ dried fruit
- ☛ coconut
- ☛ nuts

■ If you've been storing food in a cooler with frozen gel packs or ice and have kept them at 40 degrees F or lower as verified by a thermometer, keep them no longer than you should keep them in the refrigerator. For example:

☛ Hamburger, chicken, turkey and fish shouldn't be stored in the refrigerator longer than 1-2 days. Nor, should their combined time in the refrigerator plus in the cooler be more than 1 to 2 days. If they've been kept longer than this, **TOSS**.

☛ Likewise, **TOSS** larger cuts of meat like roasts, chops and steaks after a combined refrigerator/cooler time of 3-5 days. (AH)



## A new millennium: Let's get organized

The bus will be at the corner in 10 minutes to pick up your children. Then you have to dash out the door to get to work by 8 a.m. But, this morning your son cannot find his shoes, and your daughter says that the dress she wants to wear needs a button. Does this ever happen at your house?

Families with parents who work outside the home may find that the day-to-day running of the household is a major problem. Family scheduling, inventory management, purchasing and delegating tasks are part of the job—a job called household management.

Successful managers are well organized. They know that to get the necessary tasks completed, they must set priorities and develop plans. They develop systems that help them in managing both their

home and work environments.

Keeping everything in its proper place, establishing systems for getting out of the house in the morning, keeping track of important dates, housework, shopping and managing papers and bills can help you begin to organize your home.

A common reason people run late in the morning is that they do not consider what they will need until they are ready to leave. If you take a few minutes in the evening to plan your morning activities, it will ease your departure. Children can also be encouraged to organize their belongings the night before.

Establish a routine. Establishing a routine will help you do things more quickly. Can some of the activities be done the night before, such as making lunches, choosing what to wear,

or setting the breakfast table.

Once you have planned a routine, write it down and try it for a few days. Following a trial period, make any necessary adjustments.

Other suggestions: You might also:

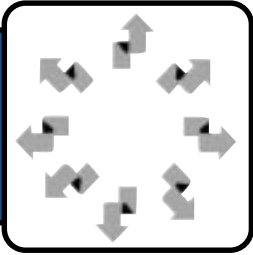
☛ Pack your purse and briefcase in the evening and leave them by the front door.

☛ Establish a place where your keys are always kept.

☛ Stay with the task you start. Do not hop from room to room as you get ready in the morning. Stopping to fix the children their breakfast while in the middle of getting dressed, wastes time. If your children are too young to make their own breakfast, consider getting up early enough to get dressed before starting breakfast. (LJ)



## Miscellaneous



### Family rituals: what are yours?

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one family the father prepares breakfast every Sunday morning. He has always done this, and to hear his children describe it, he always will: "It's just the way we do it. We kids work with Dad. It's our time to be with him. It's the way our family is."

Some people feel, maybe rightly so, that our lifestyles—the way we live family life in today's busy times—work against rituals. Strong families wisely cultivate rituals. They recognize that rituals provide a sense of continuity, understanding and love that strengthen family closeness. Rituals give family members the opportunity for pleasant association, the pauses of satisfaction so vital to our families' lives. In a word, rituals touch the heart of the family; they give members a reason to feel good about their family and each other. Most important, rituals are symbols of how family members feel about each other.

Take an inventory of family rituals.

Seldom does a family remember when a ritual began. In fact, many families take their rituals for granted or have permitted a very fine ritual to become routine. A ritual is round and full of meaning while a routine is flat, mechanistic and devoid of meaning.

Set aside some time when all family members are together and take an inventory of your family's rituals. Ask "What do we do that has special meaning to us?" "What do we do over and over again that makes each of us feel good?" or "What do we do or say that makes us different from others?"

Once a family is aware of the importance of family rituals, it is easier to begin a new one or even consciously improve or continue an existing one. As we start the new millennium, look for opportunities or activities the family does together and repeat them. Being aware of rituals and the possibility of starting a new ritual can in fact lead to a new ritual. (LJ)



### Nebraska Conservation Trees Program

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amount or include your credit card information and send the order to:

Nebraska State Forester  
103 Plant Industry Building  
UNL—East Campus  
Lincoln, NE 68583-0815  
All shipments are made

during April.

Species list

#### Conifers

- \*Rocky Mountain Juniper
- \*Ponderosa Pine
- \*Colorado Blue Spruce

\*Scotch Pine

\*Jack Pine

#### Broadleaves

- \*Siberian Elm
- \*Hackberry
- \*Honeylocust

\*Cottonwood

\*Black Walnut

\*Green Ash

\*Russian Olive

\*Red Oak

\*Bur Oak

\*Black Cherry

\*Kentucky Coffee Tree

\*Harbin Pear

\*Swamp white Oak

#### Shrubs

\*Cotoneaster

\*Lilac

\*Honeysuckle

\*Skunkbush Sumac

\*Buffaloberry

\*American Hazel

\*Crabapple

\*Amur Maple (DJ)



### Landscaping the front yard

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pattern fit the desired space to reduce pruning labor. Avoid pruning shrubs into unnatural shapes as they are difficult to maintain and do not always enhance the landscape.

An open lawn area can provide an impressive setting for a house. A front lawn uncluttered by specimen shrubs and garden ornaments can make your property seem spacious. Shrubs will appear lost and floating unless planted in groups or cultivated beds.

Flowers are most appreciated where you spend time relaxing outdoors, usually the backyard for modern homes, the front yard for older homes. Lay out beds with a combination of straight lines and bold, sweeping curves. Numerous, small wiggly curves have low visual impact.

Home landscapes, like clothing, go in and out of style. After years of growth, many yards are ready for landscape renewal and improvement. Analyze your landscape and proceed with a plan. (MJM)



## Farm/home plat map and directories are available

New farm/home plat map and directories are available for purchase at the Lancaster County Extension Office. They are published by Farm & Home Publishers, LTD of Belmond, Iowa. Price for the directory is \$19.50 (includes tax). They are available for pick-up at the reception desk during office hours. (GB)