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Mitigation Activities

Guidelines for Managing Food Supplies

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Safety and Sanitation

Do:

- Keep food in covered containers.
- Keep cooking and eating utensils clean.
- Keep garbage in closed containers and dispose outside, burying garbage if necessary.
- Keep your hands clean by washing them frequently with soap and water that has been boiled or disinfected.
- Use only pre-prepared canned baby formula for infants.
- Discard any food that has come into contact with contaminated floodwater.
- Discard any food that has been at room temperature for two hours or more.
- Discard any food that has an unusual odor, color, or texture.

Don't

- Eat foods from cans that are swollen, dented, or corroded, even though the product may look safe to eat.
- Eat any food that looks or smells abnormal, even if the can looks normal.
- Use powdered formulas with treated water.
- Let garbage accumulate inside, both for fire and sanitation reasons.

Note: Thawed food usually can be eaten if it is still "refrigerator cold." It can be re-frozen if it still contains ice crystals. To be safe, remember, "When in doubt, throw it out."

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Cooking

- Alternative cooking sources in times of emergency include candle warmers, chafing dishes, fondue pots, or a fireplace.
- Charcoal grills and camp stoves are for outdoor use only.
- Commercially canned food may be eaten out of the can without warming.
- To heat food in a can:
 1. Remove the label
 2. Thoroughly wash and disinfect the can. (Use a diluted solution of one part bleach to ten parts water.)
 3. Open the can before heating.

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Managing without Power

Here are two options for keeping food safe if you are without power for a long period:

- Look for alternate storage space for your perishable food.
- Use dry ice. Twenty-five pounds of dry ice will keep a 10-cubic-foot freezer below freezing for 3-4 days. Use care when handling dry ice, and wear dry, heavy gloves to avoid injury.

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