

Returning to Your Home: Tips for Ensuring Food Safety for Homes That Have not Been Directly Affected by the Fire

Release Date: Aug 27, 2003

Once you have received official word from the [Provincial Emergency Program](#) officials that it is safe to return to your home, here are some helpful tips to ensure your health and safety. The impact on you and your family will vary according to your circumstances. For example, some neighbourhoods may have lost power and or be on a 'boil water' advisory. Please refer to the tips that meet your needs.

If you know your power has been off or you are concerned about food safety...

- Discard all perishable foods such as meat, poultry, eggs and dairy products, especially if electricity was lost for an extended period. Refrigerated products must be kept below 4°C (40°F). If there is suspicion the power was out for longer than two hours, contact your Public Health Inspector for more information, or throw the food out.
- Frozen foods should be discarded if the electricity has been off and foods have been exposed to temperatures above 40 degrees F or 4 degrees C for more than two hours. These foods are not safe to re-freeze.
- **If in doubt, throw it out.**
- Refrigeration and freezer units subject to food spoilage can be cleaned with warm soapy water, rinsed with clean water, and then disinfected with bleach if required (1 ounce bleach per gallon or 4 litres of water). An open box of baking soda in a unit may also help with odour problems.