**[INSERT TOWN HEADER]**

**To:** Food Establishment Operators

**From:** [INSERT TOWN NAME]

**Date:** [INSERT DATE]

**Re:** Safe Flood & Power Outage Practices

Flooding events in food establishments can pose a number of risks to safe operations. While each event is different and responses can change based on the complexity and severity, here are some best practices food establishment operators should take after flood events to ensure the safe continuation of operations.

**Consult your Written Food Safety Emergency Plan**

It is best practice for food establishments to have a written food safety emergency plan to help ensure proper steps are being taken during an emergency.

**Cleaning & Sanitizing**

After flood waters have receded or have been property removed, the following steps should be taken to property disinfect the Physical Facilities:

* Thoroughly wash all physical facility interior surfaces (i.e. floors, walls, ceilings) using potable water and a hot detergent solution. Complete the cleaning by rinsing the areas free of detergents and treating with a sanitizing solution in accordance with the Food Code
* Clean all exhaust systems and hoods, it may require consultation with a professional
* Thoroughly wash all equipment (i.e. pans, dishes and utensils) using an approved wash, rinse, sanitize process or in ware washing machine that reaches a maximum temperature of at least 180oF or the utensil surface reaches a temperature of 165oF
* Inspect all equipment to be sure it is operational and all aspects of its integrity are maintained.
* Replace any flood damage items that cannot properly be cleaned liked insulation, gaskets or hoses.
* Replace filters on all equipment including ice machines and beverage dispenser
* Dry out the facilities using fans, heated air, and/or dehumidifiers to aid in the process

**Food Safety**

* Discard any refrigerated and frozen foods that came into contact with flood water. **When in doubt, throw it out**.
* Inspect canned food and discard any food in damaged cans. Can damage is shown by swelling, leakage, punctures, holes fractures etc.
* Discard foods in containers with screw-caps, snap-lids, crimped-caps, twist-caps, flip-top, snap-open and similar closure types that can into contact with flood waters.
* **If power was lost**:
  + Note the exact time the power went out and the time it is restored
  + A power outage of two-hours or less is not considered hazardous to food that was being held under safe conditions when the outage began
  + After power is restored, check the internal temperature of all food and determine if it is safe to keep, use the charts below to determine if food must be discarded or if it is still safe for consumption

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| ***Cold Foods*** | **Internal Temperature** | | |
| *Hours Power was Out* | *45 oF or Below* | *45 oF to 50 oF* | *51 oF or Above* |
| *0-2* | Keep \* | Keep\* | Keep\* |
| *2-4* | Keep \* | Keep \* | Discard |
| *More than 4* | Keep \* | Discard | Discard |

**\*Food may be sold, as long as it was 41oF or less when the power outage began and is immediately cooled to 41oF or less when power is restored.**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| ***Hot Foods*** | **Internal Temperature** | |
| *Hours Power was Out* | *130 oF or above* | *123 oF Below* |
| *0-2* | Keep \* | Keep\* |
| *2-4* | Keep \* | Discard |
| *More than 4* | Discard | Discard |

**\* Food may be sold, as long as it was 135oF or more when the power went out. When power is restored, immediately re-heat to 165oF and hot hold at 135oF or immediately cool to 41oF or less.**

**Pest Control**

* Ensure any rodents/ pests that may have entered the facility are no longer present. Remove dead pests and sanitize any food-contact surfaces that have come in contact with pests.
* Seal all openings into the facility to prevent future entry of pests or rodents.
* Dispose of contaminated or spoiled solid foods in closed containers for removal to prevent rodent and fly harborage.

**Additional Resources**:

* [U.S. Food & Drug Administration – Restaurants and Grocers Reopening After Hurricanes and Flooding](https://www.fda.gov/food/food-safety-during-emergencies/restaurants-and-grocers-reopening-after-hurricanes-and-flooding)
* [Conference For Food Protection Emergency Action Plan for Retail Food Establishments](http://www.foodprotect.org/media/guide/Emergency%20Action%20Plan%20for%20Retail%20food%20Est.pdf)