

FOOD SAFETY AFTER A FIRE

The following precautions should be observed when food has come into contact with water, smoke or damaged by heat:

DISCARD:

- All perishable foods such as meat, poultry, eggs and dairy products, especially if electricity was lost.
- All foods, unless they are packaged in waterproof, sealed, and easily cleanable containers should be destroyed. Throw away all food in paper, plastic, cloth, and cardboard containers.
- Bottled food, drink products and any food /beverage item with a screw-top lid should be thrown away due to the difficulty in removing contamination from under the caps.
- Canned goods should be destroyed if the seal is damaged, the can is bloated or dented, the contents show signs of seepage or it is suspected that heat damage occurred.
- All frozen foods that may have thawed and then become re-frozen must be discarded. If the temperature of the frozen foods exceeded or is suspected to have exceeded 4°C or 40°F at any time it must be discarded. This is very common when electricity has been lost.

IF IN DOUBT - THROW IT OUT!

WASH AND SANITIZE:

- All contaminated utensils, dishes and food contact services, such as cutting boards and counter tops should be washed with warm soapy water, rinsed, sanitized with a chlorine solution (see below) for two minutes and allowed to air dry. Method to make chlorine solution is listed below.

PLEASE NOTE:

- Wash your hands well and frequently especially before eating and after fire cleaning up.

CHLORINE SOLUTION:

- Mix ½ ounce (1 tablespoon) of 5 to 6% household bleach into 1 litre of water.

SEPTIC TANKS AND DISPOSAL FIELDS:

In most instances, fire will not affect septic tanks or the sewage-disposal field. In extreme cases the piping network may be damaged by heat. Operation of the system should be observed by the owner to ensure it is properly functioning. Check with your local health inspector if you have doubts about the operation of your system.

**For more information, contact
Environmental Health Services at (867) 667-8391.**