



Hurricane Health Safety Tips

Food Safety

Hurricanes can lead to tidal surges and flooding and have the potential to contaminate water supplies. Drinking or cooking with contaminated water can lead to illness. Loss of electricity can cause food to spoil and cause illnesses.

The following guidelines should be followed:

- Do not eat any food that may have come into contact with contaminated floodwater.
- Discard any food not sealed in a waterproof container if there is a chance it came into contact with contaminated floodwater.
- If you are without electricity for a prolonged period, use dry ice to keep refrigerated foods cold. Your refrigerator will keep foods cold for about four hours without power if it is unopened.
- A full, closed freezer will hold its temperature for approximately 48 hours, 24 hours if it is half full.
- Discard any food that has been at room temperature for more than two hours.
- If you are in doubt about the safety of any food item, throw it out.

Water Safety

- Do not use contaminated water to make ice, wash dishes, brush your teeth, wash or to prepare food.
- Drink only bottled, boiled or treated water until the water supply is tested and found safe.

- When boiling water, bring it to a rolling boil for one minute to kill organisms.
- Go to authoritative web sites listed at the end of this news release for information about water treatment safety.

General Health Issues

- Wash hands with soap and water that has been boiled or disinfected.
- If you have any open cuts or sores that will be exposed to floodwaters, keep them as clean as possible by washing with soap and applying an antibiotic ointment to prevent infection.
- If any open wounds contact contaminated water, see your physician to be evaluated.
- Excessive rain and floods are breeding grounds for mosquitoes. Wear clothes with long sleeves and long pants and use insect repellent with DEET. Remove all standing water as soon as possible.

For more information, visit the Department of Health and Senior Services website at www.nj.gov/health.