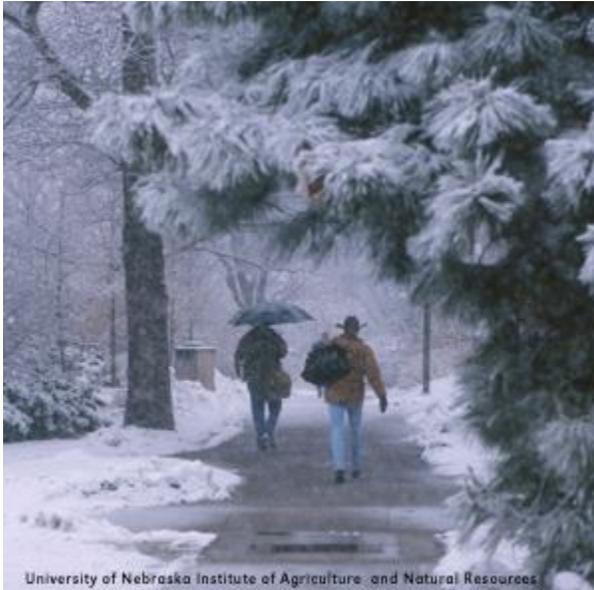


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Preparing for Winter Storm Emergencies



As Nebraskans, we take winter storm warnings in stride but these storms can often disrupt your usual routine. Winter storms can leave you without power or prevent you from getting to the grocery store.

Planning ahead for winter weather can eliminate a major source of stress for you, your family, or others you care for, such as an elderly relative or neighbor.

Planning ahead for winter storm emergencies can range from a well-organized 7-day emergency food supply to a few basic items to keep on hand. Regardless of where you are on the range of planning activities, keeping food safe in an emergency can help you plan what you'll need.

Always keep meat, poultry, fish and eggs refrigerated at or below 40 degrees F. and frozen food at or below 0 degrees F. This may be challenging if there is no power! Keep the refrigerator and freezer doors closed as much as possible to maintain the cold temperature. Once the power goes off, the refrigerator will keep food safely cold for about four hours if it's unopened. A full freezer will hold the temperature for approximately 48 hours (24 hours if it's half full) if the door remains closed.

Be prepared by stocking up on staples that don't need to be refrigerated. Either they are precooked and can be used cold, or only require the addition of hot water. Here are some examples to keep on hand.

- Water- one gallon per person per day
- Ready-to-eat canned foods vegetables, fruit, beans, meat, fish, poultry, pasta
- Soups, canned
- Smoked or dried meats, i.e.- commercial beef jerky
- Dried fruits and vegetables raisins, fruit leather
- Juices (vegetable and fruit) bottled, canned or powdered
- Milk powdered, canned, or evaporated
- Staples like sugar, instant potatoes and rice, coffee, tea, cocoa mix
- Ready-to-eat cereals, and instant hot cereals
- High energy foods peanut butter, nuts, trail mix, and granola bars
- Cookies, crackers, candy, chocolate bars, soft drinks, other snacks
- Ready-to-use baby formula for infants
- Pet food
- Manual can opener

Consider what you can do ahead of time to store food safely in an emergency. For example, keep an insulated cooler on hand to keep food cold if the power is out for more than four hours. Keep frozen gel packs or blocks of ice in your freezer and use these to keep perishable food cold in the cooler.