



*mi*Ottawa Department of  
**Public Health**



**HEALTH**  
DEPARTMENT  
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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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## **Kent and Ottawa Counties Urge Safety During Power Outage**

**GRAND RAPIDS** – A major thunderstorm overnight has left more than one hundred thousand West Michigan residents without power. Consumers Energy estimates full power restoration may not happen until Sunday. Because of the wide spread nature and duration of this event, the Kent County Health Department and the Ottawa County Department of Public Health are issuing this joint news release reminding people to be careful to avoid food borne illness and reduce their risk to potential injury or death.

One of the most common questions we get during a power outage is, “How long will my refrigerated food last?” If the power is out for less than four hours the food in your refrigerator will be as safe to consume as it was before the outage. While the power is out, keep the refrigerator and freezer doors closed as much as possible to keep food cold longer.

When power outages are predicted to last more than four hours pack important items like milk, eggs, dairy products, meats, fish and poultry into a cooler surrounded by ice. Throw away items that have been exposed to temperatures greater than 40 degrees for more than two hours.

A half full freezer will generally keep food frozen for 24 hours. A full freezer should last 48. Keeping the door closed as much as possible will help your freezer stay colder longer.

More information about power outage food issues is available here. <https://www.cdc.gov/disasters/poweroutage/needtoknow.html>

Never approach a downed power line. Stay at least 25 feet away. Call 911 and Consumers Energy at 800-477-5050.

Never use a generator inside your home, garage, carport or any other enclosed structure. Generators produce deadly carbon monoxide gas that is odorless, colorless and tasteless. Ensure that there is proper clearance for the exhaust.

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