FOOD SAFETY
DURING HURRICANE SEASON

BEFORE
Plan Ahead (if you can)

Fill your bathtub up with water. Use this water for cleaning and to flush the toilet.

Freeze containers of water and ice/gel packs to help keep food cold if there is a power outage.

Put appliance thermometers in your refrigerator and freezer.

KEEP COOL

Freezer
0°F / 0°C or below

Refrigerator
40°F / 4°C or below

Freeze Refrigerated items such as leftovers, milk, fresh meat and poultry that you do not need immediately.

Group foods together in the freezer to help food stay colder for longer.

Store Non-Perishable foods on higher shelves to avoid flood water.

If you think your power will be out for more than 4 hours, consider moving food to a cooler with ice. If available, buy dry or block ice to keep the refrigerator and freezer cold.

DURING
While the power is out

Keep the refrigerator and freezer doors closed to maintain cold temperature.

IF THE DOORS STAY CLOSED

- A full freezer will hold its temperature for 48 hours.
- A half-full freezer will hold its temperature for 24 hours.
- A fridge will keep food safe for 4 hours.

AFTER
Once power is restored

Check the temperature inside your refrigerator and freezer. If they are still at a safe temperature, please refer to temperatures under KEEP COOL your food should be fine. Discard perishable foods that have been at an unsafe temperature.

Sight, smell, and touch are easy ways to tell if food has gone bad, never taste food to determine its safety. Remember when in doubt, throw it out!

Do not consume food that may have come in contact with flood water, unless it is in a waterproof container such as a plastic food storage container.

To avoid foodborne illness, the following foods should be thrown out if held below 40°F (or 4°C) for more than 2 hours:

For questions regarding Nutrition Education, please contact: NutritionEducation@houstonfoodbank.org or call 832-369-9390