**Reopening a food business after a power cut or civil emergency - checklist**

**1. Call your local council**

**□** Check with your local council before you open-up to find out about any post-emergency provisions they may have for food businesses (e.g. a ‘boil water’ notice).

**2. Check the building condition**

**□** Can you officially use the building (e.g. has it been declared safe after an earthquake?)

**□** If yes, make sure that the condition of the building structure, surface finishes and fittings allows you to hygienically prepare and handle any open (unwrapped) food. Can debris drop onto food? Can surfaces used for food be kept clean?

**3. Check the condition of the services and equipment**

**□** Make sure that services, facilities and equipment are fully functioning. Is sewage contained within the pipework and not flowing through the premises? Have power and water supplies to the building been damaged? If any services cannot be used, have you made adequate provision for:

**□** electricity

**□** gas

**□** drinking water supply (see also 8 below)

**□** boiling/cooling water

**□** tankered-in water

**□** bottled water

**□**  disposing of waste water

**□** toilets

**□** hand-washing with clean water, soap, towels, hand sanitiser

**□** disposing of rubbish

**□** cooking, refrigerating and freezing food

**4. Is refrigerated food OK? If in doubt, throw it out!**

**□** Have fridges been damaged? Have contents been contaminated by water/sewage/debris?

**□** Check how long fridges were without power

**□ If** power was off for less than 24 hours andfridges were not opened during the power cut, contents must be checked but should be ok.

**□ If** power was off for more than 24 hours, or fridges were opened during the power cut (other than to add bags of ice) readily perishable food should be discarded.

**□** Throw out all food beyond its “use-by” date

**5. Is frozen food OK? If in doubt, throw it out!**

**□** Have freezers been damaged? Have contents been contaminated by water/sewage/debris?

**□** Check how long freezers were without power

**□ If** a freezer was full**,** power was off for less than 4 days andthefreezer was not opened during the power cut and there is no evidence of thawing, contents should be ok to use.

**□ If** power was off for more than 4 days, or the freezer was opened during the power cut, or the freezer was not full, or there is any evidence that contents have thawed, or thawed and refrozen, then DO NOT USE THE FOOD – throw it out. And **don’t** feed it to pets or send for pig food. This food should not be used.

**6. Check all other food**

**□** Throw outcans that leak and have badly dented seams and rims are thrown away

**□** Throw out any items with damaged packaging that exposes the food

**7. Cleaning and sanitising**

**□** Clean food packaging, if required, before opening it

**□** Check that all stocks of food packaging materials are clean (eg takeaway containers).

**□** Clean all food areas and clean and sanitise food surfaces, utensils and equipment

**□** Clean customer areas and clean and sanitise crockery and cutlery etc.

**8. Before re-opening**

**□** Check whether whetherfood served or stocked could be changed to a simpler and/or “safer” option?

**□** make sure staff know what to do and understand how your business will be operating until normal service has been resumed.

**8. Boil the water?**

**□ Check whether there is a “boil water” notice in place** for drinking water. Identify who will be responsible for maintaining a supply of boiled water (for drinking and cleaning food surfaces) or chlorinated water (for general cleaning) and also keep hand washing facilities stocked with soap, clean towels and hand sanitiser.

Additional information about food safety when re-opening after an emergency is available from MPI at [www.foodsafety.govt.nz](http://www.foodsafety.govt.nz) If you have any specific food safety questions not covered by the available advice please phone 0800 69 37 21 for further information.