



## Keep food safe when the power goes out

**S**evere winds, lightning, and even squirrels can temporarily cause the power to go out. We understand power outages of any length can be frustrating, especially when your fridge is stocked with perishable foods.

Extended power outages are rare, but when they occur, it's important to understand food safety measures to take to avoid illness. Here are a few food safety tips to keep in mind before, during, and after a power outage:

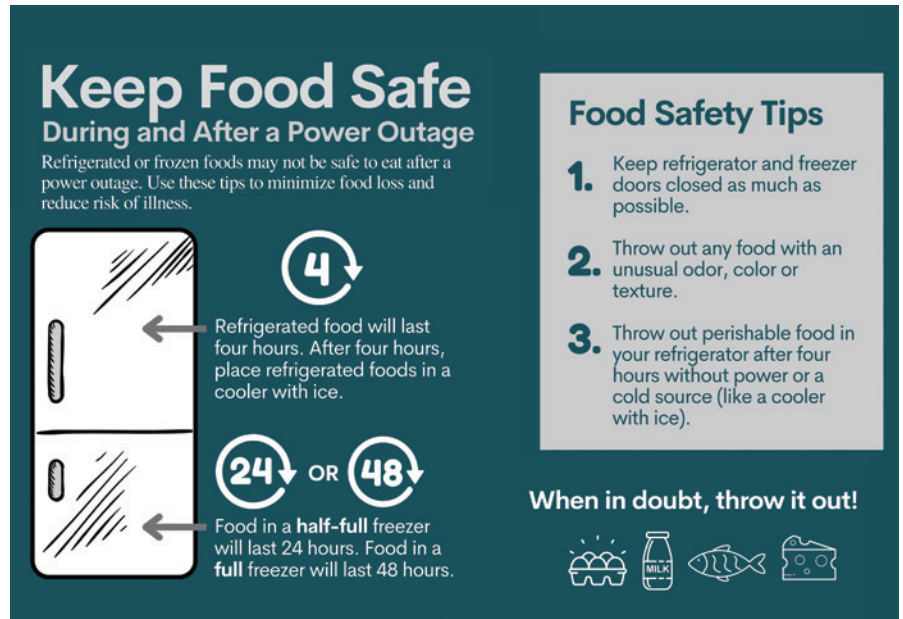
### Before an outage

A good rule of thumb is to keep an emergency supply kit on hand. Be sure to include nonperishable food items like bottled water, powdered milk, canned goods, cereal, and protein bars in your emergency kit.

If you have advance warning that an outage is possible, fill a cooler with ice—just in case the outage spans several hours. Having a cooler ready to go can buy extra time for your refrigerated, perishable items.

### During an outage

If an outage occurs, do not open the refrigerator or freezer unless *absolutely* necessary. An unopened refrigerator will keep food cold for



**Keep Food Safe During and After a Power Outage**  
Refrigerated or frozen foods may not be safe to eat after a power outage. Use these tips to minimize food loss and reduce risk of illness.


**4** Refrigerated food will last four hours. After four hours, place refrigerated foods in a cooler with ice.

**24 OR 48** Food in a half-full freezer will last 24 hours. Food in a full freezer will last 48 hours.

**Food Safety Tips**

1. Keep refrigerator and freezer doors closed as much as possible.
2. Throw out any food with an unusual odor, color or texture.
3. Throw out perishable food in your refrigerator after four hours without power or a cold source (like a cooler with ice).

**When in doubt, throw it out!**



about four hours. A half-full freezer will keep food frozen for about 24 hours, and a full freezer for about 48 hours. If it looks like the power outage will last longer than four hours, move your important perishable items to an ice-filled cooler.

### After an outage

If refrigerated foods have been exposed to temperatures higher than 40 degrees for more than two hours, the American Red Cross recommends discarding the items. If any foods have an unusual color, odor, or texture, they should be thrown away.

While most perishable

foods should be thrown out after an extended outage, there are a few items that are safe to consume after a two-hour exposure to 40-plus degrees:

- Hard cheeses that are properly wrapped
- Butter or margarine that is properly wrapped
- Taco, barbecue, and soy sauces
- Peanut butter, jelly, mustard, ketchup, and relish

The best way to avoid illness from spoiled food during or after an outage is to follow the four-hour rule of thumb. After an outage, always smell and inspect foods before consuming. Remember: When in doubt, throw it out.

To learn more about food safety after an emergency, visit [www.ready.gov/food](http://www.ready.gov/food).



# The power of preparation

**W**ith severe weather events occurring more frequently, now more than ever, it makes sense to be prepared. During a prolonged power outage or other emergency, this means having enough food, water, and supplies to last at least a few days.

In honor of National Preparedness Month in September, we want to remind members of our community about the power of preparation. While you don't have to achieve a doomsday prepper level of preparedness, there are several practical steps you can take to keep you and your family safe.

Even at a modest level, preparation can help reduce stress, anxiety, and lessen the impact of an emergency event. We recommend starting with the basics. Here are general guidelines recommended by the Federal Emergency Management Agency:

- Assemble a grab-and-go disaster kit. Include items like nonperishable food, water (1 gallon per person, per day), diapers, batteries, flashlights, prescription medications, first-aid kit, battery-powered radio, and phone chargers.
  - Develop a plan for communicating with family and friends (e.g., via text, social media, third party, etc.).
  - Have some extra cash available.
- During a power outage, electronic card readers and cash machines may not work.



CHUCK UNDERWOOD

- Store important documents (birth certificates, property deed, etc.) in safe place away from home (e.g., a safety deposit box).
- Keep neighbors and co-workers apprised of your emergency plans.
- Fill your car with gas.
- Organize your supplies so they are together in an easily accessible location that family members know about.

## Caring for vulnerable family members

If you have older family members or those with special needs, make sure they have enough medication and supplies for a few days. If they don't live with you, arrange for a neighbor to check in on them. If a severe weather event is expected, consider having

your relative stay with you if feasible. Otherwise, call them daily. If you have an infant or young children, make certain that you have ample formula, diapers, medication, and other supplies on hand to weather an outage lasting several days or more.

## Keeping four-legged family members safe

For families with pets, having a plan in place in the event of a prolonged outage or an emergency will help reduce worry and stress, especially if you need to make a decision during an emergency.

- Bring pets indoors at the first sign of a storm or other emergency. Pets can become disoriented and frightened during severe weather and may wander off during an emergency.
- Microchip your pet and ensure the contact information is up to date.
- Store pet medical records on a USB drive or in an easy-to-remember location.
- Create an emergency kit for pets that includes shelf-safe food, bottled water, medications, and other supplies.

At Sumter EMC, we care about your safety. Planning for an emergency situation today can give you more confidence to deal with severe weather and potential outages in the future.



# Notice of last date to claim refund checks

In compliance with O.C.G.A. § 44-12-190 of the Disposition of Unclaimed Property Act, Sumter EMC is attempting to locate former members whose refund checks were issued between July 1, 2016, and June 30, 2017, for membership fees and deposits that were returned by the U.S. Post Office as “undeliverable” or have otherwise been unclaimed.

A current list of these members is listed below and is also posted for your review on our website at [www.sumteremc.com](http://www.sumteremc.com), and at the following office locations: Sumter EMC Headquarters, 1120 Felder St., Americus, GA; Southern District Office, 133 Century Road W, Leesburg, GA, 31763; and Cusseta District Office, 300 US Highway 520, Cusseta, GA 31805; Monday through Friday from 8:30 a.m. to 5 p.m.

The last possible date to claim these funds is October 21, 2022. If these funds are not claimed by this date, they will be delivered to the Georgia Department of Revenue, as permitted by O.C.G.A. § 44-12-190. After this date, any attempts to reclaim your property will need to be directed to the Georgia Department of Revenue. To claim a refund or submit any questions about this notice or the list, call Lisa Cannon at (800) 342-6978 or (229) 924-8041.

AIRHEART LISA MARIE  
BALL ALFRED LARRY ESTATE  
BLACKSHEAR JAMES ELLIOTT  
BROWN FRANK  
BROWN JESSICA ROBERSON  
BROWN SHARON M  
BULLARD KATE  
BURROWS ANNIE  
CANNADY RANDALL JASON  
CARTER DAVID LEE  
COX DORIS  
DAVIDSON ROCKY WALTER JR  
DOVE KOREN DARLENE  
EDWARDS ANASTASHIA GABRIELLE  
FARQUHARSON MARK WAYNE  
FLICK CHRISTOPHER DAVID  
FOUNTAIN JAMES ALLEN ESTATE  
GAMBOL RAYMUNDO RAMOS  
GOODSON DANIEL EUGENE  
GORDON ASHLEY MICHELE  
GREEN TARA LYNN  
GRINER SHELBY DELORES ESTATE

HALE PERCINA LYNETTE  
HARRIS GUY JACKSON  
HAWKINS MARTHA  
HAYES CHRISTINA  
HEEREN DENISE R  
HILL TOMMY  
HOLLEEWOOD CONSTRUCTION  
HOLSEY WILLIE J  
HUFF JERRY  
HUGHES KENNETH RONALD ESTATE  
INGRAM NORBERT L  
JACKSON JIMMY LEE  
JEAN-PHILIPPE ADRIAN SAMMY  
JENKINS DEMETRIUS BERNARD  
JOHNSON JOHN A  
KNOTTS MICHAEL SHANNON  
LYLES JERIMIAH  
MALLARD KAYLA NICOLE  
MAUK KAREN DIANE  
MCCOY JANERISE MESHON  
MCGILL JARED ROY  
MEAD JENNIFER ELAINE

MEADER AARON ROY  
MOORE VANCE DELMAGE ESTATE  
MOREILLON BLU JASON  
NICHOLS KELLI LYN  
OBRIEN RUTLEDGE WADE DRAKE  
ODUM DEBRA JEAN  
PADGETT MELANIE KATRICE  
PERRY CHRISTOPHER ESTATE  
PHILLIPS TRISTAN STONE  
SNYDER AMANDA JO  
STEWART DUSTIN GARRETT  
STONE ROY ALLEN JR  
SULLIVAN JESSICA LYNN  
SUMMERLIN DONALD L  
THOMPSON MATTHEW RYAN  
UNDERWOOD JOHNNY MARK  
VANDEWEGHE DESTINY LEIGH  
WARREN DOMINIQUE NICHOLE  
WATSON BELINDA KAY  
ZOLOMY VICKY WOODALL ESTATE



## Energy Efficiency Tip of the Month

Our faucets and appliances use a lot of hot water. You can lower your water heating costs by using less hot water in your home. Water heating accounts for a large portion of home energy bills. To save energy (and money) used for water heating, repair any leaky faucets, install low-flow fixtures, and insulate accessible hot water lines. When it's time to purchase a new washing machine or dishwasher, look for models that are Energy Star-certified.

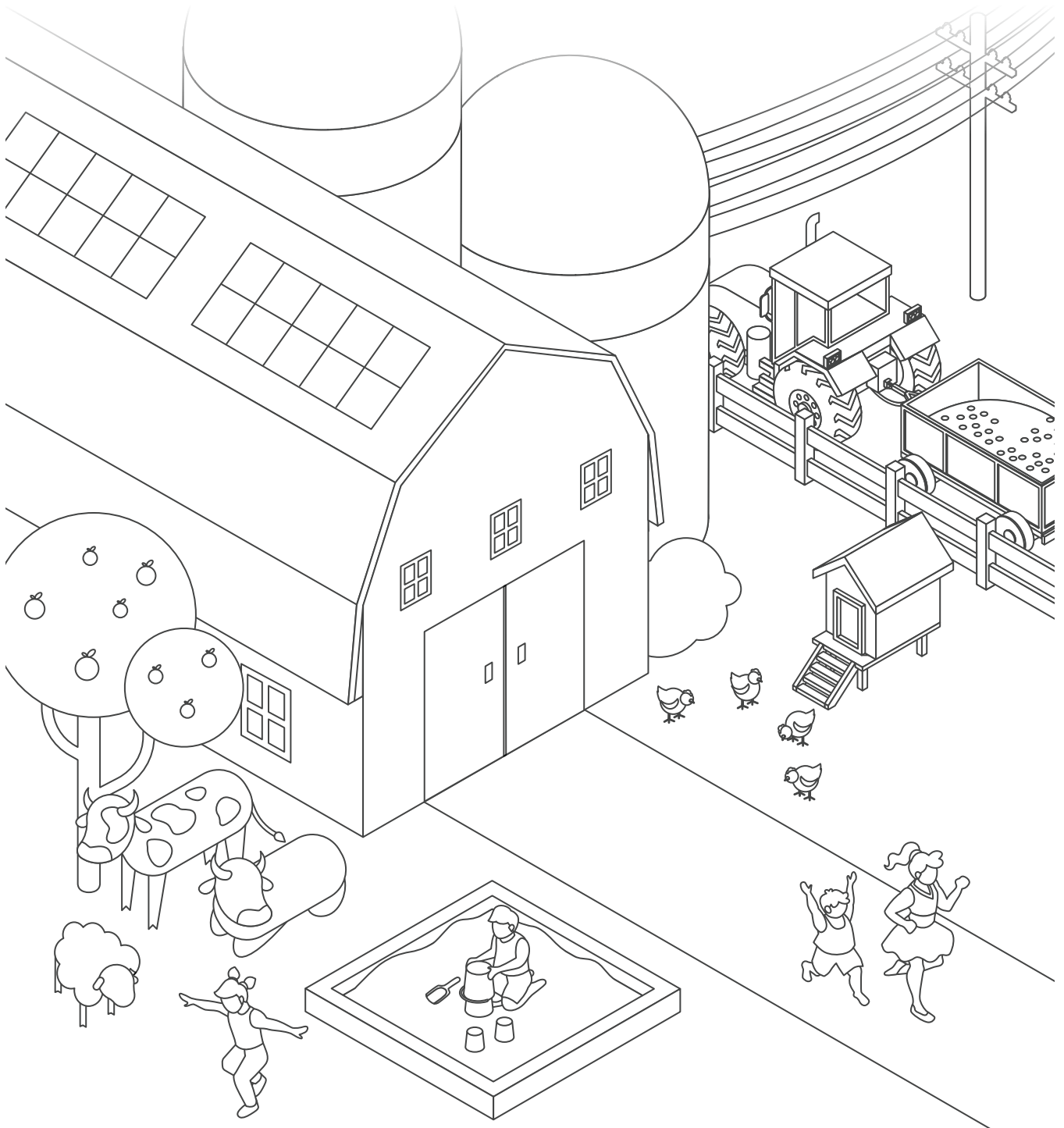
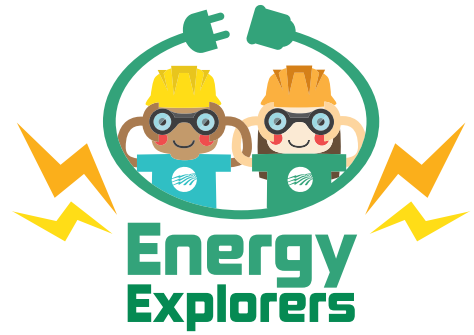
Source: [www.energy.gov](http://www.energy.gov)





# National Farm Safety and Health Week

National Farm Safety and Health Week is September 18-24! Whether you live on a farm or in the city, always play it safe near power lines and other electrical equipment.



*Sumter Electric Membership Corporation is an equal opportunity provider and employer.*