



ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH INFORMATIONAL BULLETIN

EMERGENCY FOOD SUPPLY STORE IT NOW! DON'T WAIT FOR AN EMERGENCY

WHY?

In an emergency such as a large magnitude earthquake, food suppliers such as grocery stores will probably sustain heavy damage and may not be in operation for several days.

WHAT SHOULD I DO?

Prepare an emergency food supply that will last two weeks per individual. Use food that your family likes. Canned foods, dry mixes, dehydrated fruit and similar items that are normally used will do just fine. Try for a balanced meal approach. Don't forget a mechanical can opener in the event of a power outage. Store your food supplies in more than one area. Food stored in dark, cool areas generally lasts longer. Rotate food items from storage at least once or twice a year to avoid spoilage.

WHAT ABOUT FOOD IN REFRIGERATORS OR FREEZERS?

Perishable foods such as milk and meats that are normally stored under refrigeration will spoil very rapidly without it. These foods, if still cold, should be used first. Foods in the freezer can last several days without power if the door is not opened frequently.

WHAT NOT TO DO?

1. If perishable foods lose refrigeration and become warm, **do not use**. Bacteria that can make you sick grow very rapidly without refrigeration.
2. If canned foods have been damaged, such as dents at welds or seams or are bubbled up or leaking, **do not use**.
3. Do not use food from open containers where broken glass is present or household chemicals have been spilled.

Sources: County of San Diego, Department of Environmental Health
County of Santa Clara, Environmental Health Services