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*“Working Together for a Healthier Community”*

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**Clinton County Health Department  
Press Release  
“Health Precautions for Power Failure”  
02/17/06**

Paula Calkins Lacombe, Director of Public Health is advising water operators, food services establishments, and the general public to take the following precautions due to the potential power outages associated with the high winds occurring in our area.

**WATER:**

Any Public Water system that lost pressure due to the power failure is reminded that they must report this to the Health Department. Residents are advised to take the following precautions: If the water system in your area has lost pressure for a period of time, your drinking water may be contaminated. Please take the following steps to protect your health

- Boil your water for three minutes at a full rolling boil.

-OR-

- If you cannot boil your water, you can add one teaspoon of regular house-hold chlorine bleach (Clorox, Dazzle, Purex, Exel) to five gallons of water, or one quarter teaspoon of chlorine bleach to one gallon of water. Let the water sit for thirty minutes before using or drinking.

**FOOD:**

*Food Service Establishments:*

An advisory has been issued to all food service establishments in Clinton County. All food service establishments must determine if their refrigerated potentially hazardous foods were temperature abused. All foods in refrigeration without power for 5 hours or more should be considered temperature abused and should be discarded. Temperature abuse occurs when food is above 45 degrees Fahrenheit for 2 hours or more. If refrigeration was kept closed and actual temperatures are determined with a thermometer, potentially hazardous food may be saved. Any restaurants with questions should contact the Health Department at 565-4870.

*Residents:*

Residents with food in the home freezer or refrigerator are advised to take the following precautions:

**Thawed Frozen Food**

- If there are still ice crystals in the food, it may be safely refrozen
- If uncertain whether the food temperature went above 45 degrees F at any time, the food must be discarded.
- If the food has thawed but not gone above 45 degrees F the food is safe to eat.

Perishable Foods:

- Meats, poultry, seafood, milk, cooked leftovers, gravies, soups or products containing these items must be discarded if the temperature went above 45 degrees F.

Semi-Perishable Foods

- Bread, fruit, vegetables, cheese, margarine, butter or condiments are probably safe even if the temperature went above 50 degrees F. Check the appearance and smell of the food and discard any that is moldy or has an off smell.

**Remember, spoiled food can cause serious illness - When in doubt, throw it out!**

**For more information contact the Clinton County Health Department at 565-4870.**

Endorsed by: \_\_\_\_\_

Paula Calkins Lacombe  
Director of Public Health