

STRENGTHENING OKLAHOMA



Food Safety in a Power Outage

GARFIELD COUNTY EXTENSION

If there's one thing Oklahomans know about it is dicey weather that can cause power outages. There's something else Oklahomans know about ... the importance of being prepared.

As we come into the season of freezing weather and possible ice storms that can render entire towns without electricity, [Christi Evans, Oklahoma State University Extension](#) assistant food safety specialist, has some tips for both before and during an outage.

"As in most circumstances, being prepared ahead of time is important. Consumers who don't have an appliance thermometer in both the refrigerator and the freezer should purchase them now," Evans said. "Refrigerators should run at 40 degrees Fahrenheit or below, while the freezer should be set at 0 degrees Fahrenheit or below. Knowing and monitoring the temperature in the refrigerator and freezer will help determine if food is safe after the power goes out."

No matter what news channel Oklahomans watch, the weather professionals on the local news will keep residents informed with up-to-date severe weather forecasts. In the event of severe weather, Evans suggests checking the refrigerator to see if any items such as meat, poultry or leftovers can be moved to the freezer. Frozen foods will keep longer when the power goes out.

It's a good idea to have ice and ice packs on hand which may be useful later on to help keep foods cold.

"Consumers can make their own ice containers by repurposing empty water or milk jugs by filling them with water and freezing," she said. "These containers can be stored in the freezer to fill space. This will help keep foods safe longer during a



power outage. They can also be used in coolers to keep foods cold."

When the power goes out, try to keep the refrigerator and freezer doors shut to maintain the cold temperature inside. If a refrigerator remains closed, it will keep foods at the proper temperature for about four hours. Evans said if the outage is prolonged, refrigerated foods such as meat, eggs, milk, poultry, fish, soft cheeses, salads made with mayonnaise, cooked pasta and other leftovers should be discarded.

Foods in a full freezer should stay safe for up to 48 hours. The time limit is 24 hours for a half-full freezer.

"Be sure to check the appliance thermometer in the freezer. If the food is at 40 degrees Fahrenheit or below or has ice crystals, the food can be refrozen or thawed and cooked," she said. "Check each package of food individually. Any foods that have an unusual odor, color or texture should be discarded. Never taste food to determine if it's safe."

A good rule of thumb to follow is if perishable foods have been kept at 40 degrees Fahrenheit or above for two or more hours, they should be discarded. Evans said this timeframe is cut to an hour when the temperatures are above 90 degrees Fahrenheit.

"Whether it's during a power outage or not, it is important to always wash your hands before handling foods," Evans said. "Foods such as meat, poultry, fish and eggs must be cooked to a safe minimum temperature to help ensure food safety."

Garfield County OSU Extension

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GARFIELD COUNTY EXTENSION

Stay Strong, Stay Healthy



Strength Training Program for Older Adults

Strength training is no longer just for bodybuilders. Stay Strong, Stay Healthy is an eight-week, evidence-based strength training program designed for older adults who want to improve their quality of life and stay active. Classes are held in familiar settings such as senior centers and church halls, not the gym. The exercises are easy to learn, safe and effective. No need to wear special clothes—just comfortable, loose-fitting pants and shirt, along with sturdy, closed-toe walking shoes.

What are the benefits?

Strength training:

- Increases muscle strength
- Improves balance
- Enhances flexibility
- Strengthens bones
- Relieves arthritis
- Helps control weight
- Lifts depression
- Reduces stress
- Reduces risks for heart disease

Over the course of the program, you will increase your strength and improve your balance. After the eight weeks are over, you can continue the strength training program in the comfort of your home or with a group.

Weights will be available on-site, and a trained instructor will help you learn and do these exercises safely.

Here's what we do

Stay Strong, Stay Healthy classes include:

- Warm-up exercises
- Eight strengthening exercises, with or without hand and ankle weights
- Cool-down stretches



Classes to be held January 22-March 13, each Monday and Wednesday at 12:30 pm
Call 580-237-1228 to register. No fee, but register by January 17, 2024,
Garfield County OSU Extension Office, 316 East Oxford, Enid
Joy Rhodes, Garfield County OSU Extension Educator will be the instructor



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Persons with disabilities who require alternative means for communication or program information or reasonable accommodation need to contact (name, event host/coordinator) at (phone number/email) at least two weeks prior to the event.

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Education Workshops for January

Check out some of these offerings for OHCE members, guests or anyone interested in a good time with friends and learning a new skill.

Reports and Awards Due

Project reports for both the county and local awards are due January 12 to the office for judging for our Achievement Day and be submitted to the state for awards. Check out the awards for the State Projects and Committee Award. All are listed in your yearbook starting on page 30. Garfield County has many ongoing projects at the local and county levels that should be submitted for awards. I will be glad to help if you need assistance. Don't forget the Life Story Essay, County Photography and the Member Awards

OHCE Board Meeting

The Garfield County Executive Board will meet Monday January 9, 2024 at 9:30 am. All local presidents as well as county chairmen and county officers are encouraged to attend. We will be discussing the upcoming Achievement Day scheduled for January 27th as well as other upcoming business. Hope to see a good crowd in attendance.

OHCE Leader Lesson – February

The lesson for your February meetings will be "Festivals: When, Where and Why?" Lindy Peterman from Kingfisher will present the lesson Wednesday January 24, 2 pm. Be sure to attend and learn about local festivals to attend.

FYI-the yearbooks and Leader Lesson for January will be available January 2nd.

OHCE Achievement Day and Officer Installation

Don't forget to add Saturday January 27th 9:30 am to your calendar. We will be installing officers for the Garfield County OHCE that day as well as awarding various OHCE awards to our county groups and individuals. Hope to see a great crowd. The County Executive Board members will be hosting the breakfast brunch.

Stay Strong, Stay Healthy Class

Attached is a flyer for a new Strength Training program for older adults starting January 22 and held each Monday and Wednesday through March 14. Classes will be one hour in length and begin at 12:30 pm. See the flyer for more information. The class is free, but must register by January 17th. Must have at least 5 registered for the class to be held. Classes will be held in the Garfield County Extension Conference Room at 316 East Oxford, Enid. Call 580-237-1228 to enroll.

Stay Strong, Stay Healthy



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Joy Rhodes
Extension Educator, FCS/4-H Youth Dev.

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**GARFIELD COUNTY
EXTENSION**

Dates to Remember

- Jan. 8 OHCE Board Meeting
- Jan. 12 Reports due for Judging
- Jan. 22-March 14-Stay Strong,
Stay Healthy Classes
- Jan. 24 Leader Lesson
- Jan. 27 Achievement Day



**GARFIELD COUNTY
EXTENSION**

Garfield County OSU Extension Office
will be closed
Monday, January 15, 2024
for Martin Luther King Day