



## Developing a BCHS-Accepted Emergency Preparedness Plan

The following information will be needed when completing the application for extended power and water outages. The information can also be used with specific procedures for floods, sewage backups, tornadoes, and fires.

### EMPLOYEES

#### Employee Positions and Their Responsibilities

- List key positions that are “critical” and the tasks they must perform.
  - Identify a manager or person in charge (PIC) responsible for:
    - Assessing the establishment after the event to determine whether an imminent health hazard (extended power or water outage, flooding, structural damage, etc.) exists and all food operations (food preparation, food handling, warewashing, and cleaning of the premises) must cease or whether operations can be safely resumed
    - Notifying the Houston Health Department Bureau of Consumer Health Services (BCHS) at [www.houstonconsumer.org](http://www.houstonconsumer.org) , [chs@houstontx.gov](mailto:chs@houstontx.gov) or 832-393-5100 regarding the establishment’s operational status:
      - operating under a BCHS-accepted plan and returning to normal operations after using an accepted plan for an extended power or water outage
  - OR**
    - closed or needing the required approval to resume normal operations after being closed
  - Contacting the Houston Permitting Center (832) 394-8810 to obtain permits and receive approval to replace large, floor-mounted equipment, restore interior surfaces, and/or repair, reconstruct, or remodel the facility’s structure
- Create an updated list of critical contacts and phone numbers (refer to Emergency Contacts for an example of an emergency contact list).

#### Communication

- Provide multiple forms of communication as cell phones, land lines, and/or computers may not work.
- Use texting, Facebook, Twitter, etc. to access BCHS and other governmental sites for disaster information.
- Use texting to communicate with employees as Wi-Fi and Internet connections may be down.

#### Employee Safety

- Provide personal protective equipment (PPE) if employees are involved in cleanup activities.
- Develop training for employees to:
  - Understand the importance of wearing PPE
  - Immediately report any injuries or exposures during cleanup to the person in charge
  - Follow procedures for safely removing mold, wearing a properly fitted filtration mask that carries the N-95 designation from NIOSH (National Institute of Occupational Safety and Health ) or use a mold remediation specialist

- Remove protective gloves, footwear, and clothing before walking between contaminated areas and other areas of the establishment
- Adhere to double handwashing procedures followed by a hand antiseptic immediately after working in contaminated areas
- Clean and disinfect hand sinks and faucets after use to prevent transferring contamination to other persons
- Follow OSHA (Occupational Safety and Health Administration) rules for handling detergents, sanitizers, and other chemicals used in the cleaning process

***Never use bleach in a closed space. Open windows and doors first.***

## GENERAL DISASTER ARRANGEMENTS

### Additional Arrangements and Supplies

- Develop plans for:
  - Protecting the facility (securing indoor and outdoor objects, etc.)
  - Operating with/without artificial light
  - Ventilation for cooking
- Make arrangements for obtaining:
  - Items needed to protect and monitor refrigerated food - dry ice, ice, plastic tarps, insulated covers, blankets, quilts, and/or newspapers to cover refrigerated or frozen foods in chest-type units; signs; tape; additional thermometers, etc.
  - Items for hand sink set ups – gravity type water dispenser, catch basin, soap, paper towels, hand sanitizer, etc.
  - Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) - eye protection, rubber boots, and gloves that can be cleaned and disinfected after use; outer protective clothing such as long-sleeved shirts and pants or disposable outer wear; properly fitted filtration masks with the N-95 designation from NIOSH if removing mold
  - Cleaning supplies - tools, cleaners, disinfectant, trash bags, etc.
  - Additional single-service articles (disposable plates, utensils, cups, etc.).
  - Pest control – replacement and addition of traps, glue boards, etc.

### Menu

- Develop an emergency menu consisting of a limited number of recipes that involves:
  - Little water
  - Minimal food preparation
  - Cook-serve or no-cook operations
  - No bare hand contact with any food. *This includes operations with approved bare hand contact policies in place.*

### Waste Disposal (Refer to Proper Disposal of Contaminated Food)

- Include the following in your plan:
  - Documentation (and photographs) of the type and amount of food to be discarded and the method of disposal. Location where documents will be stored for review by insurance and health officials
  - Identification and separation of temperature-abused and contaminated food from food storage

- and preparation areas until items can be removed from premises
- Method for handling small volumes of food that are denatured or destroyed before placing in an outside closed, sealed container
- Method for holding large volumes of food if waste disposal service is interrupted
- Agreement with waste disposal company to have additional waste disposal bins delivered onsite
- Agreement with salvaging company [licensed by the State of Texas](#) if salvaging is anticipated (for food service operations that may have large quantities of salvageable food items)

## PREPARATION FOR POWER AND WATER OUTAGES

- Refer to the following documents: [Preparing for a Power Outage of 4 or More Hours](#) and [Preparing for an Interruption in Water Service or a Boil Water Notice](#) to develop specific procedures for the two events.

- Include the following information in your plan:
  - When to cease all food-related operations

When and what alternative sources of power and water will be used during an imminent health hazard

- Provide instructions for performing tasks within the specific procedures including:
  - Detailed written step-by-step procedures for performing each task (how to take temperatures, how to decontaminate surfaces, what items should be disposed of and what can be kept, etc.)
  - How, when, and where the task will be performed and to whom it will be assigned

**Note: It is highly recommended that you also add procedures for flooding, sewage backups, fires, and tornado/strong, damaging winds into your plans. Procedures for these emergency events are included in this toolbox.**

\*NOTE: BCHS-Accepted Emergency Preparedness Plans apply only to situations involving long term power outages and interruptions in water service. Guidelines to prepare for other imminent health hazards (flooding, sewage backups, fires, and wind damage) are provided for your use in this toolbox. However, these other situations require complete cessation of food operations including food preparation, food handling, warewashing, and cleaning of the premises in the affected areas.

Please contact the Bureau of Consumer Health Services (BCHS) with questions or concerns.

4/26/2

