

What Might An Emergency or Disaster Look Like?

School Building Affected

- School Building Flooded
- Power Outage at School
- Food Transportation Disrupted (flooding, snow)
- Civil Disturbance (strikes)
- Snow Days



Individual Students Affected

- House fire, localized flooding

Community Affected

- Large scale flooding, hurricanes, ice storms, power outages, tornados
- Lots of community members displaced & need shelter and food

Disaster Planning: When the Kitchen Is Affected



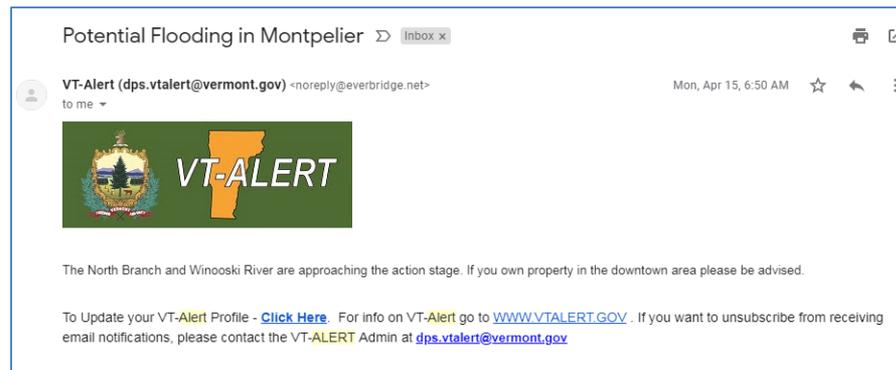
Food Safety During Power Outages & Flooding

Preparing:

- Plan ahead and know where to get dry ice and block ice nearby:
 - 50lbs of dry ice will hold an 18 cubic foot full freezer for 2 days
- Prepare your freezers:
 - Fill excess space in freezers with containers of water
 - Group food together in the freezer
 - Move refrigerated items that are not needed immediately to the freezer
- Find out if your school/site has a generator – and if it will be used to power your freezer(s) and refrigerator(s).
- Store food on high shelves that will be safely out of the way of contaminated water in case of flooding.

Register for Emergency Alerts

- Vermont: www.VTAlert.gov
- Maine: <https://www.maine.gov/portal/CAS/>
- New Hampshire: <https://www.readynh.gov/>



- Find out if your electric company will text or email power outage alerts.

Food Safety During Power Outages & Flooding

Cleaning Up:

- Follow USDA instructions for sorting and disposing of thawed items and decontaminating flooded areas.
- Food may be safely re-frozen if it still contains ice crystals or is at 40 degrees F or below
- Discard refrigerated items if power outage was longer than 4 hours.



Replacement of Spoiled/Damaged Foods, Supplies and Equipment

Document all food, supplies & equipment lost

- Nature of loss
 - For example: flooding, spoiled due to power outage, damaged by fire
- Quantity lost
- Value of items lost
- Take photos if you can!

Work with school administration to request reimbursement from:

- School Insurance Policy
- FEMA (Federal Emergency Management Administration)

Meal Component & Service Flexibilities

If a disaster affects your ability to follow federal child nutrition program regulations, you can request permission from your Child Nutrition State Agency to:

- Change meal times
- Change use of offer vs. serve
- Serve meals without milk, or with canned or dry milk
 - If fluid milk is not available
- Serve meals that do not meet the meal pattern
 - If ingredients for meals that meet the pattern are not available



Left to Right: Williamstown Elementary School, Hardwick Elementary School, Irasburg Village School

Recordkeeping Flexibility

With permission from USDA, the State Agency may allow you the following flexibilities in a disaster situation:

- Late claims may be submitted beyond the 60/90-day requirement
- Records for unsubmitted claims that are lost due to a disaster may be reconstructed
- Alternative methods or waivers may be approved if accountability systems for counting and claiming are not operational
- Verification deadlines may be extended for NSLP

If records needed for future Administrative Reviews or audits are lost due to a disaster, submit the following information to the State Agency:

- Circumstances and date of loss
- Types of records lost (production records, applications, etc.)
- Approximate age of records lost

Disaster Planning: Feeding Affected Students



When Individual Students are Affected By Disasters or Emergencies

If a disaster such as fire or flooding affects individual students at your school, but school remains open, the affected student(s) may qualify for free meals.

Students who are displaced from their homes during a disaster of any size qualify as “homeless”

- Information from school homeless liaison
- Family can fill out new application indicating homeless status
- School Food Service Program Staff can fill out new application on behalf of families that they know are affected

In a Presidentially Declared disaster, affected families may receive “D-SNAP” benefits.

- Family supplied case number
- Direct Certification List

These students will be eligible for free school meals for the rest of the school year, plus the first 30 days of the following school year – even after they return home. (12 months for CACFP).

More on Identifying Homeless Students

The McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act defines students experiencing homeless as children and youth who **lack a fixed, regular, and adequate nighttime residence**, including those who are:

- Sharing the housing of others due to loss of housing, economic hardship, or similar reason
- Living in motels, hotels, trailer parks, camping grounds due to lack of adequate alternative accommodations
- Living in emergency or transitional shelters
- Living in a public or private place not designed for humans to live
- Living in cars, parks, abandoned buildings, substandard housing, bus or train stations, or similar settings
- Migratory children living in above circumstances

School Homeless Liaisons

Homeless students identified by the school homeless liaison or a shelter official are **Directly Certified** for free meals.

– List of Vermont Homeless Liaisons:

<https://education.vermont.gov/documents/federal-programs-homeless-liaisons>

– List of New Hampshire Homeless Liaisons:

<http://www.education.nh.gov/instruction/integrated/list-local-homeless-ed-liaisons.htm>

– List of Maine Homeless Liaisons:

<https://www.maine.gov/doe/schools/safeschools/counseling/highmobility/homelessed>

Feeding Students Using “Summer Meals” When School Is Closed



Using “Summer” Meals Programs During Unexpected School Closures

To get federal reimbursement for school meals, they must be served as part of an instructional school day. If school is closed, the School Breakfast and School Lunch programs cannot operate that day.

During unexpected school closures, we can still feed students by operating a “summer” meals program.

- School Building Flooded
- Power Outage at School
- Civil Disturbance (strikes)
- Snow Days
- This option cannot be used during scheduled school vacations.

Meals may be served at the school, or at other locations.

- Library
- Community Center
- Housing Development



Summer Food Service Program lunch boxes ready for distribution at Burlington High School

How to Turn On Summer Meals for Emergencies

Schools with existing Summer meals programs – either SFSP or SSO - can edit their agreement with the state to add the necessary dates/sites.

Schools that do not operate summer meals programs during the summer may still be able to qualify and set up a program for use in an emergency. Ways of qualifying include:

- The local school or meal site is located within a low-income census tract
- The meal site is located at designated low-income housing
- The school has more than 50% of their students qualifying for free and reduced meals
- Meals served to F&R students can be reimbursed based on the individual students status

Contact your Child Nutrition Programs State Agency as soon as you think you may have an emergency closing and want to go into summer feeding.

- The State Agency will help you determine eligibility and assist with the agreement/application process

Summer Meals Regulations

Summer Meals Program regulations still apply when used for emergency feeding:

- Sponsor must be nonprofit
- Only one reimbursement rate
- Health and safety rules must be followed
- Meals must be eaten on site
- Meals to children ages 0-18 are reimbursable
- Meal pattern still applies
 - More flexible than school year
- Same record keeping requirements



Veggie Cups at Malletts Bay School,
Colchester



Supplying a temporary “Summer” Feeding Program

You can use food and supplies from your school food service program to supply your temporary SFSP site.

- Document the value of the items transferred from your SFA Account to the SFSP Account.
 - This is called a “Paper Transfer”
 - Because these are all federally funded meals programs, your SFA does not need to charge the SFSP account for the items used – although you can if you want to.
- You can transfer USDA Foods this way too.
 - You cannot charge the SFSP program for the value of the USDA Foods transferred.
 - You can charge the SFSP Program for any USDA Foods storage and delivery fees paid on the items.

Disaster Planning: Feeding The Community When School Is Closed



Using USDA Foods in Presidentially Declared Disasters or Situations of Distress

If you have permission from the State Distributing Agency, you may use your USDA Foods to provide congregate feeding for children and adults.

- Notify your USDA Foods State Distributing Agency as soon as you practically can with the following information:
 - Projected timeframe for feeding
 - Number of persons to be served
 - Number & location of feeding sites
 - Quantity and Type of USDA Foods on hand that will be used
 - Additional USDA Foods that are requested
- Keep records of the type, quantity and value of USDA Foods used and number of people served.

Using USDA Food, Continued...

- In a Presidentially Declared Disaster, USDA guarantees replacement of USDA Foods served.
- In a “Situation of Distress” (without Presidential disaster declaration) , USDA will provide replacement of USDA Foods if funding allows.
 - Note: In a situation of distress, USDA Foods are only allowed to be used for up to 30 days of congregate feeding. This limit does not apply to a Presidentially Declared Disaster.
- All types of USDA Foods are included
 - “Brown Box” and DoD Fresh Produce
- Volunteers & emergency workers may be served meals containing USDA Foods as long as they do not make up the majority of people being served.



DoD Fresh strawberries served at Rivendell Academy

FEMA Reimbursement

In a Presidentially Declared Disaster, FEMA should pay for:

- 75% of staff overtime directly related to the disaster
 - Document hours worked by SFA personnel during the disaster and wages paid.
- 75% of commercially purchased foods (non-USDA Foods)
 - Document value of all foods used for emergency feeding during the disaster
- 75% of non-food supplies
 - Document value of all supplies used for emergency feeding during the disaster.

Submit this information to the local Office of Emergency Management so that they can apply for reimbursement on your behalf.



Reimbursement for the other 25% may be available from the state or local government.

When Disaster Feeding Organizations Are Involved

Often, Emergency Feeding Organizations (EFOs) will quickly take over feeding responsibilities – but the School Food Service Program may still be involved.

- EFOs may ask the State Agency (Vermont Child Nutrition Programs) to provide USDA Foods to their sites.
 - When this request is received, the State Agency will direct the EFO to use locally available USDA Foods first – maybe USDA Foods from your kitchen!
 - If the State Agency directs you to release USDA Foods to an EFO, document the type and quantity of USDA Foods released, and provide that information to the State Agency so that the foods can be replaced.
- EFOs may want to use your school to prepare and/or serve meals for displaced persons.
 - Work with the EFO to come up with a formal arrangement for who will be in charge of the kitchen and how food, supplies, and any SFA staff time will be covered.
- EFOs may buy meals from your SFA
 - ★ – Charge the EFO a per meal rate, and subtract the value of USDA Foods used.



Preparation: What to do next

- Think about what type of disasters and emergencies are most likely in your community and how you would handle them
 - Involve your SFA staff and your school administration
 - If you have a food service management company, involve them in your planning and make sure that your contract covers what services the FSMC will be expected to provide and how they will be paid
 - Write up your thoughts into a simple plan
- Reach out to local Emergency Management Office to become involved in local disaster planning
- Train others about disaster feeding options
 - 42 minute “School Feeding During a Disaster” webinar at: <http://schoolsafety.vermont.gov/training/online>