

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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National Clean Your Fridge Day is Nov.15th!



National Clean Your Refrigerator Day is November 15th! Maybe this prodding is to get ready for the upcoming holidays, but this cleaning step is important many times of the year. One example is after a power outage.

Power outages can happen at any time, not just during bad weather. After a long power outage, food stored in the refrigerator and freezer may be unsafe and spoil. This leads to strong odors inside the appliance. Can these odors be removed? It's possible, but it may not be easy.

Here are some tips from the [United States Department of Agriculture Food Safety and Inspection Service](#):

- Dispose of any spoiled or questionable food. When in doubt, throw it out.
- Wash shelves, crispers, and ice trays with hot water and detergent. Sanitize with a bleach solution (1 teaspoon bleach per quart of water).
- Wash the appliance interior, door, and gasket with hot water and baking soda. Sanitize with a bleach solution.
- Leave the door open for air circulation.

For lingering odors, try these tips:

- Wipe inside with a solution of equal parts water and vinegar.
- Let the appliance air out for several days.

- Stuff the appliance with wads of newspaper. Close the door for several days. Remove paper and clean with vinegar and water.
- Sprinkle fresh coffee grounds or baking soda in a shallow pan, place inside the appliance to absorb odors.
- Place a cotton ball or a swab soaked with vanilla inside the appliance. Close the door for 24 hours, and check for any odor.
- Use a commercial product for cleaning appliances.

If all else fails, the appliance may need to be discarded. But remember to discard it safely.

- “Childproof” old refrigerators or freezers so children do not get trapped inside. The surest way is to take the door off.
- If the door will not come off, chain and padlock the door permanently and close tightly, or remove or disable the latch completely so the door will no longer lock when closed.

It is unlawful in many jurisdictions to discard old refrigerators or freezers without first removing the door.

So take some time this week to throw out expired food items from your fridge and cabinets, and have a wonderful and safe holiday season.

For information on nutrition programs in the Southwind Extension District (Allen, Bourbon, Neosho, and Woodson Counties), contact Sandy Haggard, Nutrition, Food Safety, and Health Agent at SJHaggard@ksu.edu or 620.365.2242.

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