

Prairie Fare: Smart And Quick Food Safety During A Refrigerator Power Outage

By Julie Garden-Robinson, Food And Nutrition Specialist, NDSU Extension

“How long is food OK in the fridge when the fridge goes out?” one of my friends asked me.

Then he mentioned throwing away some summer sausage from a friend, along with most of the contents of his fridge.

If I told you the source of the meat, his friend might find out he threw it. I will give you a big hint: these animals build dams, have large flat tails and prominent teeth.

I suspect my friend wasn't overly disappointed about the loss of that summer sausage.

When a refrigerator loses power and food has been above safe temperatures for too long, the decision about what to keep becomes fairly straightforward.

No one wants to be part of the national problem of food waste. We toss 30-40 percent of food, and much of it ends up in landfills. According to the U.S. Department of Agriculture, food waste adds up to 133 billion pounds annually, with a price tag of \$161 billion.

When an appliance malfunctions, the issue is out of our control unless we catch it soon enough and can move the food to another fridge.

Even when food is stored cold at less than 40 degrees Fahrenheit, spoilage microorganisms can act slowly. Sometimes, they let us know they are doing their devious work.

For example, molds produce colorful fuzzy substances that lead to off-odors, tastes and potential safety issues. We know not to taste it, with some exceptions, such as blue cheese, where mold is supposed to be present.

Yeasts can announce their presence in foods such as pickles with cloudiness in the brine.

Bacteria are trickier. Most of the time, we will not see, smell or taste their presence. We need to track temperature and time to determine the safety of food.

I do not enjoy wasting food, but perishable food that has been at room temperature for too long can't

be spared without taking a risk to your health.

We recommend following the U.S. Department of Agriculture's two-hour rule. If perishable food is above 40 degrees for more than two hours, then, unfortunately, it needs to be tossed.

What foods are perishable and need to be tossed in case of a refrigerator outage?

- Raw meat, poultry, gravy, casseroles, soups and stews would all fall in the throw-away category, because they are high in moisture and protein, which bacteria love.

- Soft cheeses, such as blue, brie, cottage, cream, ricotta and mozzarella, would need to be tossed, along with shredded cheese. Processed cheese, hard cheeses (Colby, Swiss, Parmesan, Romano) and grated cheese (Parmesan, Romano) are OK.

- Milk, cream, sour cream and yogurt would all need to be discarded. Hard-cooked eggs and other dishes containing eggs, such as custards, need to be discarded if left at room temperature for too long.

- Cut fresh fruit is perishable, while uncut fruit, dried fruit and opened fruit juice are OK. Plant foods can be composted.

- Many condiments, such as barbecue sauce, mustard and taco sauce are OK because of their acidity. Fruit pies are safe at room temperature, but cream pies are perishable and would need to be tossed.

- Cooked pasta, rice and potatoes need to be discarded if at room temperature too long.

The USDA has a downloadable safety chart (“Refrigerated Food During Power Outage Safety Chart”) with many more examples. Consider saving it to your computer or printing it “just in case.” You never know when appliances will decide they have reached the end of their lifespan.

No meal is worth the risk, no matter how “unique” the protein source might be. If you're planning meals around what you have on hand, here's a simple, flexible recipe

to try, courtesy of Iowa State University's “Eat Smart Spend Smart” program.

One Pot Meal - Pasta Fagioli Soup
 1/2 pound turkey sausage
 1 tablespoon oil (canola or olive)
 1 cup onion, diced
 1 clove garlic, minced
 2 cups water
 2 cups reduced-sodium chicken broth
 1 can (15.5 ounces) white beans (cannellini or great northern), drained and rinsed
 1 can (14.5 ounces) diced tomatoes
 1/4 teaspoon ground black pepper
 1 cup whole wheat pasta
 1 cup fresh spinach, cut into bite-sized pieces

Dakota Gardener: Be “Water Wise”, Grow Native Plants

By Emily How, Horticulturist, NDSU Extension

In 2011, Texas experienced its worst one-year drought since 1895. Water restrictions were intense, and reducing landscape watering was always first on the list. That summer, the lawns were all dry and crunchy. This was the first time I heard about “xeriscaping,” introduced to homeowners to help with the landscape watering restrictions.

What is xeriscaping? Coined in 1981 by Denver Water in Colorado as a response to drought, xeriscaping is the practice of water-efficient landscaping with drought-tolerant plants.

There are many ways to reduce irrigation needs, mulching, for example. However, the easiest way is to plant native plants. Native vegetation is already adapted to the climate and resources that are available in that area. This means that if the area is prone to drought, the native plants are already acclimated to it and therefore need less to adapt to those conditions. During times of stress, these plants are already adapted to function on lower soil moisture. Native plants often have longer roots, which allow them to search for nutrients in the soil, reducing fertilizer needs.

Native vegetation does not mean scruffy prairie grasses and scraggly brush; it often has beautiful flowers and seasonal colors. North Dakota

Shredded Parmesan cheese
 Heat a large sautépan over medium heat. Cook sausage and drain. Remove sausage to a plate or bowl. Add oil to the pan and heat. Add onion and garlic, then sauté for 3 minutes. Add water, broth, drained beans, tomatoes and pepper. Heat to boiling. Add pasta and cook until tender (about 8 minutes). Reduce heat to low. Add sausage and spinach, and simmer until spinach is wilted (about 3 minutes). Top with Parmesan cheese if desired.
 Makes five servings (1 1/2 cups per serving). Each serving has 320 calories, 8 grams (g) fat, 21 g protein, 43 g carbohydrate, 8 g fiber and 650 milligrams sodium.

is a wonderful place to see a wide variety of native plants because it is a prairie state, North Dakota offers numerous plants that easily adapt to more urban landscapes. Plants such as pink wild onion and prairie smoke are both native to North Dakota and make great medium-height filler plants. Other native plants, such as sunflowers, can be found in many varieties and offer a food source to both birds and insects. Native vegetation also provides shelter for many beneficial insects. Their colors naturally attract bees and butterflies while their leaves and stems provide a good habitat.

Planting native also means year-round colors and textures. Native grasses, such as little bluestem and big bluestem, have ornamental varieties that stand out as a statement in the corners of landscaped areas. In the summer, these grasses have a blue-green tint that gives them their name, but in the fall and winter, the blades turn a purplish hue, and the seed heads add texture. This is a stark contrast against the bright white winter snow. Some of my favorite native plants to add to the landscape are blanket flower, yucca, black-eyed Susan and little bluestem.

Growing native plants is an effortless way to incorporate color, add variety and be water wise.

EPA Announces \$30 Million To Help Small And Rural Communities Protect Their Water

Last week, U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) announced the availability of \$30 million in grant funding, as part of the agency's RealWaterTA Initiative. This newly available funding supports technical assistance and training to benefit small drinking water and wastewater systems and to help private well owners improve drinking water quality. RealWaterTA funding helps connect small and rural drinking water and wastewater systems with tried-and-true services, such as engineering and design expertise, operational support, workforce development, and financial management. This funding will benefit Americans nationwide, especially in rural areas where small systems face challenges operating and maintaining vital water infrastructure.

“Rural communities are the backbone of this country, and I firmly believe that we must do everything we can to ensure that they can continue to have access to clean and safe water,” said EPA Assistant Administrator for Water Jess Kramer. “EPA is investing \$30 million from the RealWaterTA initiative to provide resources to small and rural communities who are working to fulfill critical water infrastructure needs to protect human health and the environment and Power the Great American Comeback.”

“With some of the largest farms and ranches in the U.S. and the rugged terrain of the western mountains, EPA Region 8 knows and values that small and rural systems face unique challenges,” said EPA Regional Administrator Cyrus Western. “With this RealWaterTA funding, EPA is ensuring that small water systems have the resources they need to keep drinking water safe and reliable.”

In the U.S., over 90 percent of drinking water systems serve fewer than 10,000 people and many of these systems are in rural communities. These small drinking water systems, as well as small wastewater systems, work hard to protect

their communities' water, but they face unique challenges including high operator turnover, aging infrastructure, and lack of financial resources. Through this grant, EPA will fund organizations that will work side-by-side with small systems and private well owners across the country to address their challenges and continue to provide clean and safe water that is foundational to people's health.

Eligible applicants for this grant opportunity are nonprofit organizations, nonprofit private universities and colleges, and public institutions of higher education. EPA anticipates that up to five awards will be made, totaling up to \$30.7 million in federal funds.

The purpose of the agreement is to provide training and technical assistance to:

- Small public water systems to achieve and maintain compliance with the Safe Drinking Water Act.

- Small public water systems on a wide range of managerial and/or financial topics that support compliance.

- Small publicly owned wastewater systems and communities served by onsite-decentralized wastewater systems to help strengthen local water resources.

- Private well owners to help improve drinking water quality.

This grant is part of the EPA's larger commitment through Real Water Technical Assistance (RealWaterTA), which aims to provide a range of assistance for communities to identify water challenges, identify solutions, and give real-world results. The application period for these competitive grants is now open. The funding opportunity will remain open for thirty days on Grants.gov.



Minutes Of The Stanley School District No. 2

STANLEY COMMUNITY PUBLIC SCHOOL DISTRICT REGULAR BOARD MEETING MINUTES MARCH 19, 2026

PRESENT: BOARD PRESIDENT MATT RULAND; VICE PRESIDENT DYLAN ENGER; DIRECTOR ROBBY NICHOLS; DIRECTOR BETH DEAN; DIRECTOR MEGAN FRITEL; SUPERINTENDENT TIM HOLTE; BUSINESS MANAGER BETH HALL; ELEMENTARY PRINCIPAL BROOKS STAFSLIEN; ELEMENTARY ASSISTANT PRINCIPAL JENNIFER TRONSET; HIGH SCHOOL PRINCIPAL ALECIA PULVER; HIGH SCHOOL ASSISTANT PRINCIPAL PAULA BROWN

VISITORS: MARY KILEN; JODI OBERT; SARAH SALGADO

STUDENTS: NONE

President Ruland called the meeting to order at 5:02 p.m.

Pledge of allegiance was recited. Enger moved to approve the consent agenda. Dean seconded. All in favor, motion carried.

Enger moved to accept February 18, 2026 regular board meeting minutes. Fritel seconded. All in favor, motion carried.

Enger moved to approve the General Fund, Capital Project, Activity, and School lunch expenses. Fritel seconded the motion. All in favor, motion carried.

GENERAL FUND:
 AMAZON CAPITAL SERVICES, INC 6,872.72; AMERICAN FAMILY LIFE ASSURANCE 7,417.39; BOHRER, BRYAN 53.11; BRAVERA VISA 5,054.97; BRAVERA 131.00; BYTESPEED 2,495.00; CASTRO, SUSANA 20.00; CIRCLE SANITATION INC 1,428.00; CITY OF STANLEY 1,036.58; COBORN'S INC. 503.05; DAKOTA DRUG 558.24; DATA CENTER WAREHOUSE, LLC 949.53; ELLVANGER PLUMBING 1,955.00; ETSYSTEMS, INC 480.00; EVER-SPRING SUITES 220.00; EXPRESS-WAY SUITES FARGO 440.00; GENE-O'S SEPTIC SERVICE LLC 1,000.00; GLUECKERT, CHASE 102.00; GUSTAFSON, NICHOLAS 15.00; GUTTER ALLEY 14,000.00; H. A. THOMPSON & SONS 5,651.67; HARVEST RIGHT LLC 4,590.00; HILL ENTERPRISES, LLC 219.43; HORACE MANN FLEX/WAGEWORX 4,832.07; INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY DEPT 549.99; KINDRED FFA ALUMNI 10.00; LOOKOUT BOOKS 119.94; MEIERS OIL CO. 4,510.72; MENARD'S 542.97; MIDAMERICA BOOKS 387.30; MONTANA DAKOTA UTILITIES 21,673.21; MOUNTRAIL COUNTY PROMOTER 298.80; ND FBLA FISCAL AGENT 150.00; NETWORK SERVICES COMPANY 1,028.35; NEW TOWN PUBLIC SCHOOL 80.00; NORTH DAKOTA ATTORNEY GENERAL 80.00; NORTH DAKOTA COUNCIL FOR EXCEPTIONAL CHILDREN 200.00; O'REILLY AUTO PARTS 172.29; PINNACLE 4,913.05; PLOHM, MEGAN 330.00; PREBLE MEDICAL SERVICES 220.00; PROSAFE PEST CONTROL 215.00; ROSE, WHITNEY 20.00; RTC NETWORKS 2,124.21; SCHOCK'S SAFE AND LOCK 77.50; SCHOOL SPECIALTY, LLC 262.18; SHARE CORPORATION 763.60; SKAAR, WADE 80.84; STANLEY HARDWARE ACE 941.31; STEIN'S, INC. 2,135.99; TIME MANAGEMENT SYSTEMS 391.14; TRAINING ROOM 571.23; ULINE SHIPPING SUPPLY 822.91; VERIZON WIRELESS 580.41; WEST-LEY MOTOR COMPANY 1,867.09; ZELENY, KAITLYN 102.00; TOTAL: 106,246.79

FOOD SERVICE FUND:
 AMERICAN FAMILY LIFE ASSURANCE 328.17; BRAVERA VISA 125.48; CASH-WA DISTRIBUTING CO OF FARGO, LLC 1,751.71; COBORN'S, INC. 70.76; DEPARTMENT

OF PUBLIC INSTRUCTION 874.71; GRAY'S DAIRY 3,516.83; PAN O GOLD BAKING CO. 255.68; SHARE CORPORATION 674.04; SYSCO NORTH DAKOTA, INC 23,201.47; TOTAL: 30,798.85

STUDENT ACTIVITY FUND:
 AMAZON CAPITAL SERVICES, INC 204.42; ARBITER SPORTS LLC 10,000.00; BEULAH FFA ALUMNI ASSOCIATION 96.00; BISMARCK PUBLIC SCHOOLS 400.00; BRAVERA VISA 7,731.99; BSN SPORTS 630.00; CASH - WRESTLING STUDENTS MEALS 1,400.00; COBBLESTONE HOTEL & SUITES DEVILS LAKE 990.00; COBBLESTONE INN & SUITES KILLDEER 1,396.38; COBORN'S INC. 709.87; COLLINS, LEANNA 171.21; COMFORT INN BISMARCK 2,200.00; DICKINSON STATE UNIVERSITY 120.00; HAZEN HIGH SCHOOL 200.00; KENMARE HIGH SCHOOL 150.00; KILLDEER FFA ALUMNI CHAPTER 90.00; KINDRED FFA ALUMNI 90.00; MINOT PUBLIC SCHOOLS 69.00; MINOT RESTAURANT & SUPPLY 258.70; MORELLIS DISTRIBUTING - MINOT 1,227.20; ND FBLA FISCAL AGENT 2,100.00; NDSU 80.00; NEDROSE HIGH SCHOOL 147.00; PEPSI COLA BOTTLING 2,302.60; RUGBY HIGH SCHOOL 250.00; SOUTH PRAIRIE SCHOOL DISTRICT #70 100.00; STANLEY HARDWARE ACE 9.99; STANLEY SCHOOL INCIDENTAL FUND 100.00; SYSCO NORTH DAKOTA, INC 3,702.62; VERANO, EMARIE KATHLEEN 180.00; WILLIAMS, BRENNNA 352.67; TOTAL: 37,459.65

CAPITAL PROJECTS FUND:
 BRAVERA 35.00; MONDACK SAFETY AND SUPPLY 2,500.00; MONTANA DAKOTA UTILITIES 193.25; NETWORK SERVICES COMPANY 9,210.00; RTC NETWORKS 5,350.00; STANLEY HARDWARE ACE 655.97; TOTAL: 17,944.22

Superintendent Holte delivered the Financial Report.

- * Update on Oil & Gas income. Estimate closer to 1 million versus the budgeted 1.3 million.

- * CTE income received from State.

- * SRO position is only 1 versus the 2 budgeted for. Still expecting bill from the City.

- * Minibus finally came in. Discussed bringing proposition to Transportation Committee for more buses.

Enger moved to approve the financial report. Fritel seconded the motion. All in favor, motion carried.

Superintendent Holte and Business Manager Hall discussed a Bravera Bank opportunity.

- * General Operating account and General Money Market funds would be combined and earn 2% per year versus the 1.75% earned only on the General account that we currently have.

- * Also to come is the POSPAY advantage, costing \$15/month. This would prevent fraud for the checks we issue.

Fritel moved to approve the financial report. Dean seconded the motion. All in favor, motion carried.

Superintendent Holte delivered the High School Project Update.

- * Still waiting on Greenhouse completion date. Walk through projected to happen in April/May. Countertop credit is still pending.

- * Old Greenhouse EAPC noted it needs additional construction.

- * In general, updates given on the meat lab, paint peeling, random smell, and control panel from past minutes.

- * Meat lab is still in process, all else resolved.

Early Contract Release:
 * Sarah Salgado has submitted a letter to the Board requesting to be released from her contract on March 27, 2026. Sub is set to cover the remainder of the year. Discussed options.

Enger motioned to accept the early release of her contract without recourse. Nichols seconded. Motion carried.

Destruction of Records:

- * Leaves per schedule for destruction via shredding approved as long as not COVID related. Dean motioned to approve destruction unless related to COVID. Enger seconded. Motion carried.

Letter of Resignation:
 * Resignation letter submitted from Jenna Stout for the end of 2025-2026 school year. Fritel motioned to accept resignation. Enger seconded. Motion carried.

2026-2027 Teacher Contracts:
 * Superintendent Holte requested permission to release the 2026-2027 teacher contracts. Releasing now will allow at least 14 days for teachers to sign and submit. April 7, 2026 by 4 p.m. will be the due date.

President Ruland approved release with dates as above.

2026-2027 Tuition Agreement:
 * The Drosdall family does meet the policy requirement for the tuition agreement. Enger motioned to accept the tuition agreement. Dean seconded. Motion carried.

Superintendent Report:
 * Enrollment down by 1 in Elementary (442) and down 4 in High School (332). Total currently 764 in K-12.

- * Discussion of funding. Averaging by previous year and always a rolling balance.

- * Oil & Gas decreased by \$64,000.

- * School debt remains consistent at \$13.2 million.

- * Minibus delivered.

- * Bus routes are increasingly hard to staff. Hard to find Subs. There are also coaches that cannot drive if they have games. Brown & Holte met regarding the shortage with the understanding that some routes may need to be cancelled if no Sub found.

Principal Reports

Pulver Report:
 * Pulver requested approval to submit the alternative school application. Need approval from State first, then they assess the District's financials.

Enger motioned for approval to submit. Fritel seconded. Motion carried.

- * Discussion of requirements and placement for alternative school. Old Ag room could be a possibility of flexible placement for those that have jobs or children. Requirements are 4 hours/day or 20 hours/week with chunks of time blocked out. Ages must be 16-21.

- * Check & Connect program has decreased the number of students on the ineligibility list.

Brown Report:

- * Band concert on 3/19/2026.

- * Spring PT conferences continue.

- * Mr. Peterson won the CEC Teacher of the Year award. He will accept at banquet on 3/27/2026.

- * Still ordering textbooks for 2026-2027 year.

- * FFA banquet is on 3/27/2026.

- * Donkey basketball is rescheduled for April.

Staflien Report:

- * PT conferences have had a good turnout. Teachers reached out and usually have 90% attendance. All teachers are available during the conferences.

- * End of year staffing - planning for the 2026-2027 year.

- * Had a music program recently, the next is 4/7/26.

- * The kids enjoyed the One-act play and were happy they were able to attend.

- * NAPE testing scheduled for 22 students.

- * Accreditation observation from Mitch Strand received positive feedback.

- * It is that time of year, kids tracking in with muddy boots. Custodians are doing a good job of keeping up with the mud.

- * Doughnuts for Grown Ups is 4/29/26.

- * Bake sale for Marx family.

- * State testing is going on.

- * Coffee Club was on news - KMOT/Facebook.

- * AR program - Neset next year.

- * No public comments.

Ruland adjourned at 6:00 p.m.

Matt Ruland, Board President

Beth Hall, Business Manager

Proceedings Of The New Town City Council

NEW TOWN REGULAR CITY COUNCIL MINUTES MARCH 18, 2026

Members Present: Mayor Jay Standish; Council Members: Frank Sillitti, Doug Bratvold, Nathaniel Mayer, Jesse Baker.

Others Present: City Attorney Williams Woods; Esmeralda Mata; Laurie Giffey; John DeGroot; Cal Oldenburg; Chief Troy White Owl; Patrick Samson; Ryan Anderson; Jason Strand; Julie Herbel; Geri Bratvold; Susie Hayden.

Meeting called to order at 5:02 P.M. Agenda adjustment: To remove (4) Brian Oswski, (8) City Foreman.

Motion by Bratvold, seconded by Baker to approve the agenda. All voting Aye, motion carried.

1. Minutes:
 Motion by Mayer, seconded by Bratvold to approve February 9th Special Meeting.

All voting Aye, motion carried.

Motion by Mayer, seconded by Bratvold to approve February 19th, 2026 Minutes.

All voting Aye, motion carried.

2. Financials:

Motion by Mayer, seconded by Bratvold to approve the financial and bill set.

Voting Aye: Mayer, Bratvold, Baker, Sillitti

Voting Nay: None

First of the Month: CK#046219 Clean Tech \$22,816.72; CK#046220 Electro Watchman, Inc \$606.04; CK#046221 Eurofins \$250.00; CK#046222 Indigo Sign Works, Inc \$1,495.00; CK#046223 MWEC \$14,140.41; CK#046224 RDO Equipment \$28,542.05; CK#046225 Riteway Business Forms \$268.35; CK#046226 RTC \$2,558.68; CK#046227 Two Lane Tactics, LLC \$479.99; CK#046228 United Quality Cooperative \$147.94; CK#046229 Williams Woods E Jr \$3,500.00; **Total Checks \$74,804.18**

Council Bills: CK#046244 AE2S \$81,926.59; CK#046245 Aire-Master Of ND \$120.00; CK#046246 American Welding & Gas, Inc \$3,329.70; CK#046247 Armor Interactive \$3,879.93; CK#046248 Geri Bratvold \$277.29; CK#046249 Britt Communications \$900.00; CK#046250 CEI Electrical Contractors \$2,059.72; CK#046251 Cenex Fleet Card \$147.94; CK#046252 Colonial Research \$3,337.58; CK#046253 Core & Main \$3,426.80; CK#046254 Jamerson Demetrius \$136.20; CK#046255 Dept. Of Environmental \$183.55; CK#046256 First District Health Unit \$90.00; CK#046257 Flowpoint Environmental \$332.22; CK#046258 Furushet Law Firm \$500.00; CK#046259 Graymont WI LLC \$9,685.00; CK#046260 Hawkins Inc \$3,505.62; CK#046261 Julie Herbel \$223.55; CK#046262 Information Technology \$350.95; CK#046263 Karl Emergency Vehicles \$803.30; CK#046264 Language Link \$22.29; CK#046265 Menards Minot \$15.99; CK#046266 Mountrail County Auditor \$15,000.00; CK#046267 Mountrail County Promoter \$413.10; CK#046268 NAPA \$1,915.61; CK#046269 New Town Jack & Jill \$32.93; CK#046270 North Rental & Lease \$23,130.00; CK#046271 One Call Concepts \$9.30; CK#046272 Premier Partners \$4,200.00; CK#046273 Rolac Contracting Inc \$715,283.59; CK#046274 RTC \$97.68; CK#046275 Satermo Hardware \$292.33; CK#046276 Slawson Exploration \$12.98; CK#046277 Trinity Medical Group \$42.00; CK#046278 United Quality Cooperative \$2,335.05; CK#046279 United Quality Cooperative \$2,989.11; CK#046280 United Quality Cooperative \$2,225.76; CK#046281 United Quality Cooperative \$432.85; CK#046282 Valint Construction \$240,096.84; CK#046283 Visa \$746.43; CK#046284 Visa \$328.46; **Total Checks: \$1,124,922.73**