

Family Living Focus

by
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40 Degrees, Please

A refrigerator is one of the most important pieces of equipment in the kitchen for keeping food safe. Temperatures below 40 degrees slow bacterial growth. When food is left at room temperature for more than two hours bacteria have a chance to grow to levels that could make you sick.

There are two basic families of bacteria; pathogenic bacteria, which causes foodborne illness, and spoilage bacteria, which causes food to spoil. Pathogenic bacteria develop rapidly in the Temperature Danger Zone (from 40 to 140-degrees) but generally

do not alter the taste, smell, and appearance of food. You cannot tell if pathogenic bacteria are on food. Spoilage bacteria can grow in your refrigerator. They cause food to develop a bad taste, smell bad and spoil.

Your refrigerator will protect most foods from pathogenic bacterial growth. It is important to keep potentially hazardous foods such as raw meats, dairy products, eggs, and prepared foods cold; at 40 degrees or below.

Do you know the temperature of your refrigerator? A study of home refrigerators found that more than 46 percent of the

home refrigerators were too warm to store food safely. Since most home refrigerators do not have built in thermometers, you need an appliance thermometer to verify the temperature.

Appliance thermometers are specially designed to measure the temperature of the air either in the refrigerator or in the freezer. Most are made to hang from a wire rack or sit on a shelf. Some have suction cups that attach to the side of the unit.

To measure the temperature in the refrigerator: Put the thermometer in the middle of the refrigerator and wait 5-8 hours. If the temperature is not 40F. or slightly below, adjust the temperature control. Most refrigerators can be easily adjusted to run colder or warmer. Check again after 5-8 hours.

Keep the thermometer in the refrigerator at all times. This is especially important if a power outage occurs. If the refrigerator is still 40 degrees when the power comes back on, the food is safe.

The Top Four Cool Rules: In addition to monitoring the temperature USDA recommends fol-

lowing these foodhandling practices to help keep refrigerated food safe.

The Chill Factor — Refrigerate or freeze perishables, prepared foods and leftovers within two hours of purchase or preparation, or within one hour if the temperature is above 90F. Marinate foods in the refrigerator.

The Thaw Law — Never defrost at room temperature. Thaw food in the refrigerator. For quick thawing, place food in airtight plastic packaging and submerge in cold running water, or thaw food in the microwave if you will be cooking it immediately.

Food can also be cooked without defrosting it first. Make sure food reaches its safe internal temperature.

Divide and Conquer — Separate large quantities of warm food into small, shallow containers for quick cooling in the refrigerator. Cover after the food has cooled to 40F to prevent cross contamination.

Avoid the Pack Attack — Don't overstuff the refrigerator. Cool air must circulate to keep food safe. Be sure that the refrigerator door is only opened when necessary, then close as soon as possible.

For safety and quality, eat any refrigerated leftovers within one or two days. Keep in mind, you can't see, smell or taste the pathogenic bacteria that can make you sick. If there is a question about the safety of food, remember — When in doubt, throw it out!

Country Quilters Show Is March 21-22

CREAMERY (Montgomery Co.) — Homemakers Country Quilters will hold a quilt show March 21-22 from 10 a.m.-4 p.m. at the Montgomery County 4-H Center, Route 113, Creamery, 1 mile south of Skippack Pike, (Rt. 73).

All quilts on display have been made by the club members and have never been shown at any previous shows.

Door prizes and chances on the pictured raffle quilt made by the club will be available. There will be a Merchant Mall and a Recycle Room. Hourly demonstrations, a boutique, and lunch also are available. Proceeds benefit Ronald McDonald House and the Montgomery County 4-H Center. Donation \$4.

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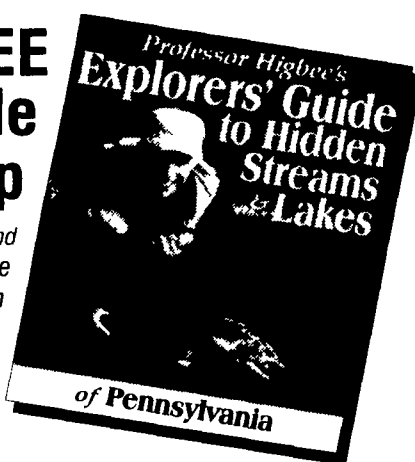
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LOST STREAM MAP

The STREAM MAP OF OHIO resembles another map—known to Pennsylvania anglers as the "Lost Stream Map."

The "Stream Map of Pennsylvania" was completed in 1965 after a 30 year effort by Howard Higbee, a former Penn State Professor.

Professor Higbee succeeded in creating a map of the highest detail possible—a map that shows every stream and lake. He painstakingly plotted by hand, the location of 45,000 miles of streams onto a 3 by 5 foot map.

The map sold extremely well—until it was lost several years later. Incredibly, the printer entrusted with the original drawing and printing plates declared bankruptcy, then carelessly hauled Higbee's 30 years of work to the landfill.

The few remaining dog-eared copies became a prized fisherman's possession. Professor Higbee was offered \$400 for one of his last maps. And state agencies were forced to keep their copies under lock and key.

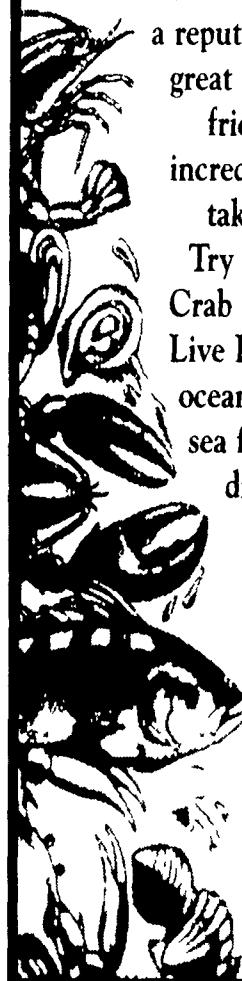
The experts had always told Professor Higbee that reprints were impossible, because the maps were printed in non-photographic blue.

Then in 1991, at the age of 91, Howard Higbee's dream came true. Computers made it possible to reprint the map. Holding an updated map, Howard said, "I never thought I'd live to see this day."

Then, by combining Professor Higbee's knowledge with computer technology -- the STREAM MAP OF OHIO was created.

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