

# Power Outage

## Preparedness Checklist

A power outage is when the electrical power goes out. Planned or unexpected, it can last for days or longer. Lighting, refrigeration, water, air conditioning, the internet, and medical equipment may not work. Climate change is making extreme weather events more frequent. These weather events can stress our electrical grids and lead to more power outages. But we can take action to prepare. Prepare now to protect yourself, your loved ones, and your home.



## What to Do: Before



### Know and Plan for your Personal Electrical Needs.

Evacuate means going from an unsafe place to a safe place.

- Take an inventory of your essential electrical needs. Then consider how you would live without them when the power goes out. Make a plan for the essentials.
  - How will I stay warm or cool?
  - How will I make food or have clean water?
  - How will I communicate with others?
  - How will I run any needed medical equipment?
- If you need to keep medications cool or have medical devices that need power, discuss a backup plan with your doctor.
- It may not be safe to stay home, have a plan to evacuate safely.



### Create a Support Network

- Identify trusted individuals that can help you or that need your help.
- Know how to contact them. Keep a paper copy of your contact list.
- Know how to help each other. Support may include:
  - Help staying at home or evacuating.
  - Bringing food or needed supplies.



### Plan to Stay Connected

- Sign up for free emergency alerts from your local government.
- Plan to monitor local weather and news.

- Have a backup battery or a way to charge your cell phone.
- Have a battery-powered radio during a power outage.



### Learn Emergency Skills

- Learn First Aid and CPR.
- Be ready to live without power, gas, and water.
- Plan for backup power.



### Gather Emergency Supplies

- Gather food, water, and medicine. Stores and pharmacies might be closed. Organize supplies into a Go-Kit and a Stay-at-Home Kit.
- Go-Kit: at least three days of supplies that you can carry with you. Include backup batteries and chargers for your devices (cell phone, CPAP, wheelchair, etc.)
  - Stay-at-Home Kit: at least two weeks of supplies.
  - Plan to use coolers and ice to keep food cold. Make sure you have a thermometer so that you can check the temperature of your fridge.
  - Have a 1-month supply of medication in a child-proof container and medical supplies or equipment.
  - Keep personal, financial, and medical records safe and easy to access (hard copies or securely backed up). Consider keeping a list of your medications and dosages on a small card to carry with you.

## What to Do: During



### Monitor Alerts

- Listen to the radio and monitor your cell phone for local information and alerts.



### Keep Food Cold and When in Doubt, Throw it Out

- Eat your fresh, perishable foods first.
- Avoid opening your refrigerator and freezer to keep food cold. Use coolers with ice if necessary.
- Measure the food temperature in your refrigerator and freezer with a thermometer. Throw out perishable food that has been warmer than 40 degrees F.
- Ask your healthcare provider or doctor about refrigerated medicines.



### Prevent Power Overloads and Fire Hazards

- Unplug appliances and electronics to avoid damage from power surges.

- Use flashlights, not candles.
- Turn off the utilities only if you suspect damage or if local officials instruct you to do so. Your gas line can only be turned on by a professional.
- Contact a professional if you have problems once the utilities are back on.



### Prevent Carbon Monoxide Poisoning

- Do not use a gas stove to heat your home.
- Do not use outdoor stoves indoors for heating or cooking.
- If using a generator, keep it outside in a well-ventilated area away from windows.



### Decide if you Need to Stay or Go

- Evacuate if your home is too hot or too cold, or if you have medical devices that need power.
- Communities often provide warming or cooling centers and power charging stations.

## What to Do: After



### Stay Safe

- Avoid damaged or fallen power lines, poles, and downed wires. They can electrocute you.
- Avoid electrical shock in flood areas. Do not go into flooded areas or use any electrical equipment that may have been underwater.
- Be aware of carbon monoxide poisoning. Do not use gasoline, propane, natural gas or charcoal-burning devices inside a home, garage, tent, or camper — or even outside near an open window. Carbon monoxide can't be seen or smelled, but it can kill you fast. If you start to feel sick, dizzy, or weak, **get to fresh air right away — do not delay.**



### Take Care of Yourself

- It's normal to have a lot of bad feelings, stress, or anxiety.
- Eat healthy food and get enough sleep to help you deal with stress.
- You can contact the Disaster Distress Helpline for free if you need to talk to someone. Call or text **1-800-985-5990**.

Prepare so you can protect.

| For more information, visit [redcross.org/prepare](https://redcross.org/prepare)

| Download the Emergency App

