

# Power Outage

Whether a power outage in your home is caused by grid failure or severe weather, you can take the following steps to safely prepare and respond. Remember to include power outages in your family disaster plan.

- Keep extra cash on hand since an extended power outage may prevent you from withdrawing money from ATMs or banks.
- Keep a complete disaster supply kit handy with water, non-perishable foods, medicine, baby supplies and pet food and more. See the full list on the "Disaster Safety" FLASH Card.
- Only open your refrigerator or freezer when necessary, and remember that food should be safe to eat so long as the outage lasts no more than four to six hours.
- Have one or more coolers with ample ice for cold food storage in case power outage is prolonged. Perishable foods should not be stored for more than two hours above 40 degrees Fahrenheit.
- Have an emergency power supply for anyone dependent on electric medical equipment.
- Keep a supply of flashlights, batteries, hand-crank cell phone chargers, battery and solar-powered radios on hand.
- Do not use candles as they pose a fire hazard.
- Connect only individual appliances to portable generators and never plug a generator into wall outlets. Plugging generators into the home's electrical system can feed electricity back into the power lines and endanger both you and line workers.
- Use gas-powered generators only in well-ventilated outdoor areas.
- Be careful when driving through intersections as traffic lights may be out, creating a dangerous situation.
- Turn off any electrical equipment that was in use prior to the power outage, but leave one light on to alert you when power resumes.
- Check on elderly neighbors, friends or relatives who may need assistance if weather is severe during the outage. See the "People with Disabilities" FLASH Card for additional recommendations.
- During a power outage, resist the temptation to call 911 for information – use radios instead.
- Keep your car fuel tank at least half-full (gas stations usually rely on electricity to power their pumps).
- When power is restored, wait a few minutes before turning on major appliances to avoid problems caused by a sharp increase in demand.

Protect your home in a *FLASH* with  
the Federal Alliance for Safe Homes!

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