



Power Outages

Power outages can cause a number of safety concerns. Knowing the following information can help.

Before a power outage

Identify and label any life-sustaining and medical equipment with your utility company.

When purchasing a generator, follow the instructions carefully. Keep your generator outside and run a cord inside. Don't connect your generator to main service panels—it's dangerous!

Stock up on candles, flashlights, a battery-powered radio with extra batteries, and a wind-up clock.

Remember that cordless phones will not work when the power is out.

Practice how to open the door without power.

During a power outage

Turn off the refrigerator and freezer. Even if it is dark, turn light switches and buttons on lamps or appliances to the "off" position.

Unplug computers and other sensitive equipment to protect them from possible surges when the power is restored.

Wait for power to be restored. Wait at least 15 minutes after power is restored before turning on other appliances.

Conserve water, especially if you use well water. Avoid using propane heaters for indoor heating—they use oxygen and create carbon monoxide that can cause suffocation.

Use battery-operated flashlights or glow sticks for lighting.

Be careful around power lines and sagging trees with broken limbs.

Keep food safe

Keep the refrigerator and freezer doors closed. Your refrigerator's freezer will keep food frozen for up to a day. A separate fully-loaded freezer will keep food frozen for two days.

Buy dry ice to save frozen food. Do not handle dry ice with your bare hands. Use blocks or bags of ice to save refrigerator foods.

Be aware of the outside temperature. The outside temperature varies, especially in the sun. Frozen food may thaw and refrigerator food may become warm enough to grow bacteria. Food stored outside must be secured from contamination by animals.

If in doubt, throw it out. Throw out meat, seafood, dairy products and cooked food that does not feel cold. If food looks and smells fine, illness-causing bacteria may be present.