

## Ways to Cope with a Power Outage

Winter weather can bring unexpected hazards: slippery roads and sidewalks, poor visibility up ahead, vehicles breaking down and leaving you stranded, drivers going too fast and sliding into each other. They're enough to make anyone fearful of venturing out when the weather's bad. Staying home comes with risks, too—not only shoveling your driveway and walkways, but being able to take care of your needs, from an adequate stockpile of food and water to staying warm. What should you do if your power goes out?

### Prepare for a power outage

If you're anticipating a storm, stock up on food staples, non-perishable foods, fresh batteries, water, wood for your fireplace or wood-burning stove.

### Problem solve

Check your fuse box to see if a circuit has blown. Then, check your neighborhood. If your neighbors' lights are out, notify your utility company immediately.

### Stay informed

Depending on conditions, you may be able to access weather information using the Internet on your cell phone. Invest in a battery-powered charger for your cell phone, or use your car charger. Or, make sure you have batteries for your radio or a portable TV.



### **Stay warm**

In the daytime, layer your clothing, starting with long underwear. Wear socks and slippers on your feet and dress as though you're going outdoors. Gloves for your hands, a hat on your head to retain heat. At night, sleep under layered sheets and blankets—as many as you can bring out of storage.

### **Gather your family around your fireplace or wood-burning stove.**

Eat and drink hot foods such as soup, tea and hot cocoa. Invest ahead of time in a battery-powered kitchen equipment such as a slow cooker and tea kettle. You can also use your gas stove, gas grill or camp stove, provided you don't bring the grill or camp stove indoors. Even gas stoves with electronic ignitions can be lit using a match.

### **Close off rooms you're not using.**

### **Move to the basement.**

**Go someplace safe where generators are working—to a shopping mall, restaurant or a movie theater. You can also go to a hotel.**

### **Preserve your food**

Keep your refrigerator shut. For extended power outages, move your perishable food to a cooler packed with ice.

### **Preserve your hot water**

If you must have a hot shower to warm up, keep it short.

### **Stay safe**

- Use flashlights and battery-powered lanterns rather than candles for light; minimize your risk of starting a house fire.
- Stay inside in severe storm conditions. Don't venture out where trees or power lines may be down.

**Avoid the risk of carbon monoxide poisoning. Don't use kerosene heaters or bring any outdoor cooking and heating appliances indoors.**

### **Preserve your major appliances**

Unplug all major appliances including your computer(s) to prevent damage from power surges.

### **Stay entertained**

Read books, play board games, or get out of the house to a place you enjoy, provided hazardous road conditions have passed.