



# GET READY!

## BLACKOUTS

Severe weather and storms can cause power outages and restoring power can take time. In some instances, such as during extended periods of hot weather, power companies may schedule periods of power outages to help conserve power across the board.

### Before

- Conserve energy to help reduce the threat of a power outage.
- Have flashlights, a battery-powered or hand-cranked radio, and extra batteries on hand.
- Set aside extra water and buy or make extra ice.
- If you have space in your refrigerator or freezer, keep plastic containers filled with water, leaving about an inch of space in each one. The chilled or frozen water will help keep food cool during power outages.
- Be prepared to cook outside.
- If you take any medications that must be refrigerated, check with your doctor or pharmacist to determine how long medications can last.
- Back up computer files regularly.
- Have some form of phone that does not require electricity, either a standard telephone or a cellular phone, rather than a cordless telephone.
- Keep your vehicle's gas tank at least half full.
- If you have any specific needs or disabilities that require electrical equipment, make plans for dealing with a power outage.

### During

- Never use candles for emergency lighting, use flashlights.
- Turn off any electrical equipment you were using when the power went out. Leave one light on so you know when the power returns.
- Avoid opening the refrigerator and freezer.
- Use generators safely. Don't run a generator inside a home or garage. Connect the equipment you want to run directly to the generator. Do not connect a generator to a home's electrical system. Keep instructions with the generator and be familiar with its use.
- Use the telephone only for emergencies.
- Listen to the radio for updates.
- Eliminate unnecessary travel.
- If it is hot outside, take steps to remain cool. If it is cold, take steps to remain warm.



- If you are in your car when a power line falls on it, stay in the vehicle and do not touch anything on the outside of the vehicle. Use your horn or cell phone to signal for help.
- Short-term power outages usually occur during peak energy usage times, usually between 4:00 p.m. and 7:00 p.m. on weekdays, and typically last one hour.

### After

- Stay away from downed power lines.
- Do not refreeze any dairy products, seafood, or food that has thawed completely and been above 40° for more than two hours, or anything with a questionable texture or smell. If in doubt, throw it out.