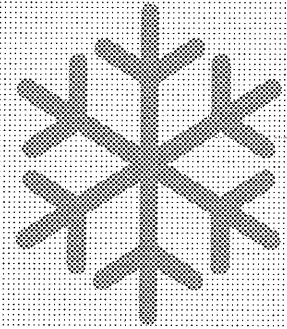




Winter Storm

Preparedness Checklist

Winter storms can bring extreme cold, freezing rain, sleet, heavy snowfall, ice, and high winds. These storms can cause transportation, heat, power, and communication disruptions. They also can close schools, stores, and workplaces. Winters are getting warmer and shorter because of climate change. But, because a warmer atmosphere holds more moisture, heavier snowfalls are more likely to occur. We can take action to prepare. Prepare now to protect yourself, your loved ones, and your home.



What to Do: Before



Plan to Stay Warm

- Stay warm indoors to prevent frostbite and hypothermia.
- Before the winter season begins, make sure you can heat your home safely. Prepare your home to keep out the cold with insulation, caulking, and weather stripping.
- Consider using an indoor thermometer or thermostat to monitor the temperature inside.
- Plan to check on loved ones and neighbors to make sure they are staying warm. This is especially important for older adults and babies.
- Drink plenty of warm fluids but avoid caffeine and alcohol.
- Avoid travel if you can.
- If you must go outside, plan to dress properly. Keep your nose, ears, cheeks, chin, fingers, and toes covered in warm, dry clothing. These areas are the first to be at risk for frostbite.
 - Wear layers of loose clothing, a coat, hat, mittens, and water-resistant boots. Use a scarf to cover your face and mouth.
- Know where you will go if your home becomes too cold. You could go to a friend's house, a public library, or a warming center.



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 to use during a power outage.
- Understand the alerts you may receive.
 - A WATCH means **Be Prepared!**
 - A WARNING means **Take Action!**
- Create a support team to help everyone stay safe in a disaster. Plan how you can help each other.



Gather Emergency Supplies

- Gather food, water, and medicine before a winter storm. Stores might be closed, and it may be unsafe to travel.
- Organize supplies into a Go-Kit and a Stay-at-Home Kit.
 - Go-Kit: at least three days of supplies you can carry with you if you need to go somewhere else to stay warm. Include critical backup batteries and chargers for your devices (cell phone, CPAP, wheelchair, etc.)
 - Stay-at-Home Kit: at least two weeks of supplies.
- Ensure you have enough warm clothing, such as hats, mittens, and blankets, for everyone in your household.
- You may lose access to drinking water. Set aside at least one gallon of drinking water per person per day.
- Consider having emergency supplies in your vehicle, such as a blanket, warm clothing, a first aid kit, and boots.
- Have a 1-month supply of needed medications and medical supplies. Consider keeping a list of your medications and dosages on a small card to carry with you.
- Keep personal, financial, and medical records safe and easy to access (hard copies or securely backed up).
- Have a snow shovel and ice-melting products to keep your walkways safe.



Learn Emergency Skills

- Learn first aid and cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR). Emergency services may be delayed.
- Learn how to spot and treat frostbite and hypothermia.
- Install and test smoke alarms and carbon monoxide detectors with battery back-ups.
- Be ready to live without power, gas, and water.
- Learn how to keep pipes from freezing.

What to Do: During



Stay Safe

- Use care with space heaters and fireplaces to prevent fires. Keep anything that could catch fire **at least 3 feet (1 meter) from the heat!**
- Avoid using candles because of the fire risk. Use battery-powered lights and flashlights instead.
- Prevent carbon monoxide poisoning. Carbon monoxide poisoning is common during power outages when people use other means to heat and cook. You can prevent carbon monoxide poisoning.
 - Only use generators, grills, and camp stoves outdoors and away from windows.
 - Carbon monoxide kills. If you start to feel sick, dizzy, or weak, **get to fresh air right away – do not delay.**
- To prevent carbon monoxide poisoning and home fires, never heat your home with a cooking oven or stove.



Act Fast if You See Signs of Frostbite or Hypothermia

- **Frostbite** is when a part of your body freezes. Your nose, ears, cheeks, chin, fingers, and toes often are the first affected. People may experience pain, numbness, and a change of skin color.
 - What to do for frostbite: Move to a warm place. Warm the affected area gently by soaking in warm water (NOT hot) until the skin appears normal and feels warm. Seek emergency medical care.
- **Hypothermia** can kill you. It occurs when your body loses heat faster than it can produce heat. This causes a dangerously low body temperature. Older adults, babies, children, and people with certain health conditions are more at risk.
 - Shivering is one of the first signs of hypothermia; other signs include confusion, drowsiness, and slurred speech.
 - What to do for hypothermia: Seek emergency medical care right away. Move to a warm place. Remove any wet clothing and warm the body slowly.

What to Do: After



Stay Safe

- If you need to go outside, use extreme caution when driving or walking on ice.
- Avoid damaged or fallen power lines. They can electrocute you.
- Be aware of branches, trees, and ice that may fall.
- Avoid overexertion when shoveling snow. Take frequent breaks and, if possible, work with a partner.
- Use ice-melting products to keep your walkways safe.
- Go to a public library, shopping mall, or warming center if your home becomes too cold.



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 | Download the Emergency App



Be Red Cross Ready

Power Outage Checklist

Sudden power outages can be frustrating and troublesome, especially when they last a long time. If a power outage is 2 hours or less, you need not be concerned about losing your perishable foods. For prolonged power outages, though, there are steps you can take to minimize food loss and to keep all members of your household as comfortable as possible.

Energy Conservation Recommendations

- Turn off lights and computers when not in use.
- Wash clothes in cold water if possible; wash only full loads and clean the dryer's lint trap after each use.
- When using a dishwasher, wash full loads and use the light cycle. If possible, use the rinse-only cycle and turn off the high-temperature rinse option. When the regular wash cycle is done, just open the dishwasher door to allow the dishes to air dry.
- Replace incandescent light bulbs with energy-efficient compact fluorescent lights.

How do I prepare for a power outage?



To help preserve your food, keep the following supplies in your home:

- One or more coolers—Inexpensive Styrofoam coolers work well.
- Ice—Surrounding your food with ice in a cooler or in the refrigerator will keep food colder for a longer period of time during a prolonged power outage.
- A digital quick-response thermometer—With these thermometers you can quickly check the internal temperatures of food to ensure they are cold enough to use safely.

Put together an emergency preparedness kit with these supplies in case of a prolonged or widespread power outage:

- Water—one gallon per person, per day (3-day supply for evacuation, 2-week supply for home)
 - Food—non-perishable, easy-to-prepare items (3-day supply for evacuation, 2-week supply for home)
 - Flashlight (*NOTE: Do not use candles during a power outage due to the extreme risk of fire.*)
 - Battery-powered or hand-crank radio (NOAA Weather Radio, if possible)
 - Extra batteries
 - First aid kit
 - Medications (7-day supply) and medical items
 - Multi-purpose tool
 - Sanitation and personal hygiene items
 - Copies of personal documents (medication list and pertinent medical information, deed/lease to home, birth certificates, insurance policies)
 - Cell phone with chargers
 - Family and emergency contact information
 - Extra cash
- If someone in your home is dependent on electric-powered, life-sustaining equipment, remember to include backup power in your evacuation plan.
 - Keep a non-cordless telephone in your home. It is likely to work even when the power is out.
 - Keep your car's gas tank full.

What should I do during a power outage?



Keep food as safe as possible.

- Keep refrigerator and freezer doors closed as much as possible. First use perishable food from the refrigerator. An unopened refrigerator will keep foods cold for about 4 hours.
- Then use food from the freezer. A full freezer will keep the temperature for about 48 hours (24 hours if it is half full) if the door remains closed.
- Use your non-perishable foods and staples after using food from the refrigerator and freezer.
- If it looks like the power outage will continue beyond a day, prepare a cooler with ice for your freezer items.
- Keep food in a dry, cool spot and keep it covered at all times.

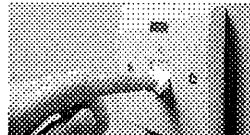
Electrical equipment

- Turn off and unplug all unnecessary electrical equipment, including sensitive electronics.
- Turn off or disconnect any appliances (like stoves), equipment or electronics you were using when the power went out. When power comes back on, surges or spikes can damage equipment.
- Leave one light turned on so you'll know when the power comes back on.
- Eliminate unnecessary travel, especially by car. Traffic lights will be out and roads will be congested.

Using generators safely

- When using a portable generator, connect the equipment you want to power directly to the outlets on the generator. Do not connect a portable generator to a home's electrical system.
- If you are considering getting a generator, get advice from a professional, such as an electrician. Make sure that the generator you purchase is rated for the power that you think you will need.

What should I do when the power comes back on?



- Do not touch any electrical power lines and keep your family away from them. Report downed power lines to the appropriate officials in your area.

Throw out unsafe food.

- Throw away any food that has been exposed to temperatures 40° F (4° C) for 2 hours or more or that has an unusual odor, color or texture. When in doubt, throw it out!
- Never taste food or rely on appearance or odor to determine its safety. Some foods may look and smell fine, but if they have been at room temperature too long, bacteria causing food-borne illnesses can start growing quickly. Some types of bacteria produce toxins that cannot be destroyed by cooking.
- If food in the freezer is colder than 40° F and has ice crystals on it, you can refreeze it.
- If you are not sure food is cold enough, take its temperature with the food thermometer. Throw out any foods (meat, poultry, fish, eggs and leftovers) that have been exposed to temperatures higher than 40° F (4° C) for 2 hours or more, and any food that has an unusual odor, color or texture, or feels warm to touch.

Caution: Carbon Monoxide Kills

- Never use a generator, grill, camp stove or other gasoline, propane, natural gas or charcoal-burning devices inside a home, garage, basement, crawlspace or any partially enclosed area. Locate unit away from doors, windows and vents that could allow carbon monoxide to come indoors.
- The primary hazards to avoid when using alternate sources for electricity, heating or cooking are carbon monoxide poisoning, electric shock and fire.
- Install carbon monoxide alarms in central locations on every level of your home and outside sleeping areas to provide early warning of accumulating carbon monoxide.
- If the carbon monoxide alarm sounds, move quickly to a fresh air location outdoors or by an open window or door.
- Call for help from the fresh air location and remain there until emergency personnel arrive to assist you.

Let Your Family Know You're Safe

If your community experiences a disaster, register on the American Red Cross Safe and Well Web site available through RedCross.org to let your family and friends know about your welfare. If you don't have Internet access, call 1-800-RED-CROSS to register yourself and your family.



For more information on disaster and emergency preparedness, visit RedCross.org.