

AFTER **NORMAL**

7-DAY POWER OUTAGE PACK

A calm, day-by-day plan for staying warm or cool,
fed, safe and connected when the power is out for
days

PLAN THE FIRST HOUR. GET THROUGH THE FIRST WEEK.

For: For any household preparing for a multi-day power outage from
storms, winter weather, heat or grid failure, including homes with electric
or gas heating, medical needs, babies or older adults.



KEEP THIS PAGE**ONE-PAGE SUMMARY: WHAT TO DO, AND WHEN**

- 1 This week: Fill in the contact sheet and the power-budget worksheet. Put battery-powered or battery-backup carbon monoxide (CO) alarms on every level and outside sleeping areas, and test them. CO is an invisible gas that can kill.

- 2 This week: Keep flashlights, headlamps and spare batteries where you can find them in the dark.

- 3 First hour: Look outside. Is it only your home? Report the outage to your utility. Write the time the power failed in your outage log.

- 4 First hour: Turn off or unplug major appliances, space heaters and electronics, and make sure stove burners and the oven are off. A surge when power returns can damage electronics. Leave one low-wattage lamp on, away from curtains and bedding, so you can tell when power is back.

- 5 First hour: Keep the fridge and freezer doors closed. Use flashlights and battery lanterns, not candles.

- 6 First hour: If anyone uses oxygen or other powered medical equipment, or needs medicine kept cold, start your written backup plan now. If equipment cannot be kept running, call 911. Do not stop taking a medicine you depend on. Ask your pharmacist or doctor the same day what to do.

- 7 Always: Stay at least 35 feet (about 11 meters) from any downed power line. Assume it is live. Call 911 and your utility.

- 8 Always: Never run a generator, grill, camp stove, charcoal burner or fuel heater indoors, in a garage, carport, porch or basement, even with doors open. Keep a generator at least 20 feet (about 6 meters) from any window, door or vent, with the exhaust pointing away from the house, and use a heavy-duty outdoor cord longer than 20 feet.

- 9 Always: Never plug a generator into a wall outlet or home wiring. Only a transfer switch fitted by a qualified electrician is safe. Turn the generator off and let it cool before refueling, and store fuel outdoors in approved containers. Keep power stations and battery packs in a cool, dry place, and stop using any that swell, smell or overheat.

- 10 Always: Never heat your home with a gas oven, stovetop, grill or dryer.

- 11 CO warning: Headache, dizziness, nausea or confusion can mean CO. If an alarm sounds or anyone feels sick, get everyone outside into fresh air and call 911. Do not go back in until the fire service says it is safe.

- 12 Gas smell: If you smell gas (like rotten eggs), leave at once with everyone. Do not use a lighter, switch or phone inside. Call 911 or your gas utility from outside. Do not go back in until you are told it is safe.

- 13 Food: A closed fridge keeps food safe for about 4 hours. A full freezer holds about 48 hours (about 24 hours if half full). Eat fridge food first, then freezer food, then canned and dry food. Throw away perishable food that has been above 40°F (4°C) for 2 hours or more. Do not taste food to check it. When in doubt, throw it out.

- 14 Water: Store 1 gallon (about 4 liters) per person per day, for at least 3 days and ideally 7. To purify water, boil it for 1 minute (3 minutes above 5,000 feet).

- 15 Every day, days 2 to 7: Use the stay-or-leave tables each morning and evening, and any time someone feels unwell. Decide early.

- 16 Call 911 at once for: confusion, fainting, hot skin and a rapid pulse (possible heat stroke); or shivering that has stopped, slurred speech, drowsiness or a body temperature below 95°F (35°C) (possible hypothermia). Do not wait for a thermometer.

- 17 Babies and older adults: Dress a baby in one more layer than you would wear. Never put a baby to sleep in an adult bed or on a sofa. Check on older adults and anyone alone at least once a day.

- 18 Neighbors: Check on older neighbors and anyone who may be alone, by phone or from a safe distance. If nobody answers and there is no heat, or you smell gas, do not go in. Call your local emergency number.

- 19 When power returns: Check food before you eat it. Switch things back on one at a time, a few minutes apart.

PART 3**CARBON MONOXIDE: THE DANGER YOU CANNOT SEE**

Carbon monoxide (CO) is a gas you cannot see or smell. Most outage deaths from it happen when people run fuel-burning equipment in the wrong place. This section shows exactly what to do and what never to do.

WARNING

More than 150 people in the US die each year from accidental non-fire carbon monoxide poisoning (US Fire Administration, citing the Consumer Product Safety Commission). Use battery-powered or battery-backup CO alarms, and never run fuel-burning equipment in or near your home.

SET UP A GENERATOR SAFELY

Do this every time. Read the maker's manual first.

- 1** Place the generator outdoors, at least 20 feet (about 6 meters) from every window, door and vent, with the exhaust pointing away from the house.
Porches and carports are not far enough.
- 2** Use a heavy-duty outdoor-rated cord longer than 20 feet, sized for the load.
This lets you keep the generator far from the house.
- 3** Plug appliances directly into the generator or into a cord. Do not plug it into a wall outlet.
Backfeeding can kill utility workers and damage your home wiring.
- 4** Keep the generator dry, and use outlets with ground-fault circuit interrupter (GFCI) protection.
A GFCI shuts power off fast if there is a shock hazard.
- 5** Turn the generator off and let it cool before you refuel it.
Fuel spilled on a hot engine can catch fire.
- 6** Store fuel outdoors in approved containers, away from the home and from anything that makes heat or sparks.
Fuel vapor is flammable.

FREE SAMPLE

THAT WAS A TASTE

You have just read the opening of **7-Day Power Outage Pack**. The full guide has 10 parts, including:

- ☐ The Plan: First Hour to Day 7
- ☐ Heating, Cooling and Deciding When to Leave
- ☐ Carbon Monoxide: The Danger You Cannot See
- ☐ Light, Food and Cooking
- ☐ Water, Sanitation and Hygiene
- ☐ Backup Power and Your Power Budget
- ☐ Medical Needs, Equipment and Medicine
- ☐ Information, Staying Safe and Looking After Each Other
- ☐ When Power Returns
- ☐ Worksheets: Contact Sheet and Outage Log

Get it as an instant PDF download at afternormal.co/guides/power-outage.html