



Emergency Action Plan – Utility Failure

If power or utilities fail, follow these guidelines to remain safe until utilities have been restored.

- Immediately address the needs of anyone in the home with special medical needs that require electrical support to support life.

Describe individual's needs:

Who will be responsible for supporting these individuals? _____

- Call utility company, number located on Emergency Action Plan Contact List to report outage.
- Evacuate all individuals to a shelter if utilities will be out for more than 2 hours. Prearranged community shelter is available at _____ with annual verification.
- If unable to evacuate, support individuals in the home and be aware of extreme hot or cold conditions.
- Notify supervisor or personal supports if utilities remain down for more than 2 hours.
- Emergency kit available. A kit should include drinking water, food, flashlight, batteries, battery operated – radio, first aid kit, cell phones, vital documents, disability related supplies (see [Preparing for Disaster - Red Cross](#) or [Preparing Makes Sense - FEMA](#) for full lists of supplies.
- If individual has a generator for support during power outages, follow procedure for generator use.
 - Test backup power systems regularly and document
 - If backup power system relies on batteries, be aware that stored batteries require periodic charging, even if they are unused. A charging routine must be strictly followed.
 - Test alternative power equipment regularly to ensure it will function in an emergency. Check monthly.
 - Know the working duration of any batteries that support the system being used.

Food Safety

If the power is out for less than 2 hours, then the food in your refrigerator and freezer will be safe to consume. While the power is out, keep the refrigerator and freezer doors closed as much as possible to keep food cold for longer.

If the power is out for longer than 2 hours, follow the guidelines below:

- For the Freezer section: A freezer that is half full will hold food safely for up to 24 hours. A full freezer will hold food safely for 48 hours. Do not open the freezer door if you can avoid it.
- For the Refrigerated section: Pack milk, other dairy products, meat, fish, eggs, gravy, and spoilable leftovers into a cooler surrounded by ice. Inexpensive Styrofoam coolers are fine for this purpose.
- Use a food thermometer to check the temperature of your food right before you cook or eat it. Throw away any food that has a temperature of more than 40 degrees Fahrenheit.

Safe Drinking Water

When power goes out, water purification systems may not be functioning fully. Safe water for drinking, cooking, and personal hygiene includes bottled, boiled, or treated water. If you are unsure if your drinking water is safe, contact the local health department. Here are some general rules concerning water for drinking, cooking, and personal hygiene. Remember:

- Do not use contaminated water to wash dishes, brush your teeth, wash and prepare food, wash your hands, make ice, or make baby formula. If possible, use baby formula that does not need to have water added.
- If you use bottled water, be sure it came from a safe source. If you do not know that the water came from a safe source, you should boil or treat it before you use it. Use only bottled, boiled, or treated water until your supply is tested and found safe.
- Boiling water, when practical, is the preferred way to kill harmful bacteria and parasites. Bringing water to a rolling boil for 1 minute will kill most organisms.
- If you don't have clean, safe, bottled water and if boiling is not possible, you often can make water safer to drink by using a disinfectant, such as unscented household chlorine bleach, iodine, or chlorine dioxide tablets. These can kill most harmful organisms, such as viruses and bacteria.

Extreme Heat and Cold

Heat

Be aware of yours and others' risk for heat stroke, heat exhaustion, heat cramps and fainting. To avoid heat stress, you should:

- Drink a glass of fluid every 15 to 20 minutes and at least one gallon each day.
 - Avoid alcohol and caffeine. They both dehydrate the body.
- Wear light-colored, loose-fitting clothing.
- Take frequent cool showers or baths.
- If you feel dizzy, weak, or overheated, go to a cool place. Sit or lie down, drink water, and wash your face with cool water. If you don't feel better soon, get medical help quickly.

- Work during cooler hours of the day when possible, or distribute the workload evenly throughout the day.

Heat stroke is the most serious heat illness. It happens when the body can't control its own temperature and its temperature rises rapidly. Sweating fails and the body cannot cool down. Body temperature may rise to 106°F or higher within 10 to 15 minutes. Heat stroke can cause death or permanent disability if emergency care is not given.

Warning signs of heat stroke vary but can include:

- Red, hot, and dry skin (no sweating)
- Rapid, strong pulse
- Throbbing headache
- Dizziness, nausea, confusion, or unconsciousness
- An extremely high body temperature (above 103°F)

If you suspect someone has heat stroke, follow these instructions:

- Immediately call for medical attention.
- Get the person to a cooler area.
- Cool the person rapidly by immersing him/her cool water or a cool shower, or spraying or sponging him/her with cool water. If the humidity is low, wrap the person in a cool, wet sheet and fan him/her vigorously.
- Monitor body temperature and continue cooling efforts until the body temperature drops to 101-102°F.
- Do not give the person alcohol to drink. Get medical assistance as soon as possible.
- If emergency medical personnel do not arrive quickly, call the hospital emergency room for further instructions.

Cold

Hypothermia happens when a person's core body temperature is lower than 35°C (95°F).

Chronic hypothermia happens from ongoing exposure to cold indoor temperatures (below 16°C or 60°F). The poor, the elderly, people who have hypothyroidism, people who take sedative-hypnotics, and drug and alcohol abusers are prone to chronic hypothermia, and they typically:

- misjudge cold
- move slowly
- have poor nutrition
- wear too little clothing
- have poor heating system

Preventing Hypothermia

- Everyone, especially the elderly and ill, should have adequate food, clothing, shelter, and sources of heat.
- Blankets can help, even in poorly heated rooms.
- In cold weather, wear layers of clothing and a hat, which help to keep in body heat.
- Move around. Physical activity raises body temperature.

Source : CDC <http://www.bt.cdc.gov/disasters/poweroutage/needtoknow.asp>

Backup power check. Date checked with initials.

Signature and Initials

- 1. _____
- 2. _____
- 3. _____