

# Power Outage

## Be Prepared

- Keep essential emergency supplies on hand.
  - Fresh batteries and flashlights
  - A portable, battery-powered radio and/or television
  - Wind-up or battery-powered clock
  - Non-perishable food and plenty of water
  - Extra cash, since ATMs may not work
- Keep cell phone or hardwire telephone on hand. Cordless phones will not work.
- Develop emergency plans for evacuating homes or businesses and practice them.
- Have backup smoke detectors if your system is wired to your home or business.
- Be aware that gas appliances, if ignited with an electronic ignition, will not ignite automatically.

## During a Power Outage

- Do not call 911 to ask about outage. Contact your local utility for updated information:
  - Georgia Power: 1-888-891-0938
  - DeKalb Power Outage Hotline: 404-294-2323
  - **Se Habla Espanol:** 1-800-870-3942
  - 24-hour hotline: 1-888-660-5890
- Turn off electronic equipment that was on prior to outage.
- Turn one light on so you know when power is restored.
- Use a battery-powered radio, television or car radio to monitor local stations for news and information on the outage.
- Do not run a generator inside a home or garage.
- Do not connect a generator to a home's electrical system. Connect devices to the outlets on the generator.
- Listen to local radio and television for updated information.

## After the Power Outage

- When power is restored, wait a few minutes before turning on major electric appliances. This will help prevent demand surges.
- Call your local utility if power has been restored to your area but you are without power.
- If you used a portable generator, make sure to refuel it following the outage.

## Hot-Weather Power Outage Tips

- Drink plenty of cool water. Avoid alcohol or drinks with caffeine.
- Wear lightweight, light-colored, loose-fitting clothing.
- Open windows for ventilation and to allow cool evening breezes in.
- Visit an air-conditioned shopping mall or public building that has power.
- Take a cool shower or bath.

## Cold-Weather Power Outage Tips:

- If you lose power and/or heat in the winter, insulate your home as much as possible. Hang blankets over windows and doorways and find a well-insulated room for living while power is out.
- Dress warmly. Wear hats, scarves, gloves and layered clothing.
- Use fireplaces for heat and light, but be sure to keep the damper open for ventilation.
- Do not burn charcoal indoors and do not use your kitchen gas range to heat rooms as this can lead to fire or a hazardous smoke condition.
- Open your faucets to a steady drip so pipes do not freeze.

## Elderly and Vulnerable People

Those individuals who are vulnerable to temperature extremes should ask a friend or relative to check on them during the blackout. These individuals could include infants up to four years old, those 65 years of age or older, those who are ill or on certain medications and overweight individuals.

If you rely on electric power for life-support devices, you should consider some of the following tips:

- Make sure your local utility is aware of your special needs.
- Keep emergency phone numbers in a convenient, visible location.
- Have an alternate plan to ensure continuity of any life-support needs. This may include staying with a friend or relative during an outage or using a back-up generator.

## Food Safety during a Power Outage

- Avoid opening the refrigerator and freezer. Keeping freezer and refrigerator doors closed prevents the loss of cold air.
- A fully loaded refrigerator may keep food fresh for about six hours.
- A fully loaded freezer may keep food frozen for up to two days.
- If any food in the refrigerator or freezer is **warmer** than **45 °F**, throw it out.

## Save Freezer Food During Power Outages

Precautions can be taken to protect refrigerated or frozen food during power outages.

- Keep the freezer closed to keep the cold air inside. A full, free-standing freezer will maintain frozen food about two days and a half-full freezer will maintain about one day.
- Use alternate cooling methods:
- If the power stays out for several days, use dry ice to maintain freezing temperatures in the freezer. About 25 pounds of dry ice will chill a 10-cubic-foot, full freezer for three to four days. Be sure to follow the handling instructions carefully. Do not touch dry ice or breathe the fumes.
- Use block ice in the refrigerator. Place the ice in the refrigerator's freezer unit, and put refrigerated perishables such as meat, poultry and dairy items in the freezer unit. Place meat and poultry on a tray so that if they thaw, the juices will not contaminate other food.

## Preparing Ahead To Keep Food Safe

- Put extra ice in freezer, since a full freezer retains cold longer. Freeze plastic one-gallon jugs three-fourths full of water. The jugs will freeze without cracking. The frozen water will help keep the freezer cool. If needed, you can melt the water for drinking.
- Turn the temperature selection to the coldest setting.
- Consider setting up a portable cooler with ice and basic necessary food items. This will allow access to these items without opening the refrigerator and freezer.

## Traffic Safety during a Power Outage

- Treat traffic signal lights that are out as a four-way stop, with the person on the right having the right-of-way.
- Use caution in school zones and yield to pedestrians.
- Pedestrians should use caution at intersections. Make eye contact with drivers before crossing intersections.
- Pedestrians who are visually impaired should request help crossing intersections, as signal indicators will not be working.