



FACT SHEET: POWER OUTAGES

POWER OUTAGES

Power outages can last for minutes, hours or days. Power outages are often caused by freezing rain, sleet storms and/or high winds that damage power lines and equipment. Also, cold snaps or heat waves can place a high demand on the electricity grid. During a power outage, you may be left without heating or air conditioning, lighting, hot water, or even running water.

Know What to Do:

Before a Power Outage:

- ◆ If you have a wood-burning fireplace, make sure you have the chimney cleaned every fall to eliminate creosote build-up which could ignite and cause a chimney fire.
- ◆ Keep a flashlight and batteries in an easy to reach place and make sure everyone knows where to find it.
- ◆ Make sure your carbon monoxide detector has a battery-powered back-up.

During a Power Outage:

- ◆ Turn off all lights, except one inside and one outside, so that both you and hydro crews outside know that power has been restored.
- ◆ Do not open your freezer or fridge unless it's absolutely necessary.
- ◆ Use proper candle holders. Never leave lit candles unattended and keep out of reach of children. Always extinguish candles before going to bed.

After a Power Outage:

- ◆ Do not enter a flooded basement unless you are certain that the power is disconnected.
- ◆ Do not use flooded appliances or electrical outlets unless they have been checked by an electrician.
- ◆ Check your food supplies in fridges, freezers and cupboards for spoilage. If food in freezer is thawed, it should be cooked right away.

Be informed:

- ◆ Listen to your battery powered radio for information about the power outage and for notices from the hydro company.
- ◆ A freezer full of food will keep food frozen for 24 to 36 hours, if the door remains closed.
- ◆ If your house uses a sump pump as protection from ground water, clear valuables from the basement floor in case of flooding.

Prepare Now

- ◆ Planning for a backup power supply for essential medical equipment.
- ◆ Connect computer equipment, televisions and other sensitive electronics to surge-protecting power bars.
- ◆ Make your seventy-two (72) hour emergency kit and be prepared for unexpected power outages.



Sources:

Get Prepared Website (Government of Canada):
<http://www.getprepared.gc.ca/cnt/hzd/pwrtgs-eng.aspx>

Red Cross Website:
<http://www.redcross.ca/what-we-do/emergencies-and-disasters-in-canada/for-home-and-family/make-a-plan/planning-for-power-outages>