

# Power Outage Tips

## Before a Power Outage

- Build or restock your emergency preparedness kit, including a flashlight, batteries, cash, and first aid supplies.
- Make sure you have alternative charging methods for your phone or any device that requires power.
- Charge cell phones and any battery powered devices.
- Know where the manual release lever of your electric garage door opener is located and how to operate it.
- Purchase ice or freeze water-filled plastic containers to help keep food cold during a temporary power outage.
- Keep your car's gas tank full-gas stations rely on electricity to power their pumps. If you use your car to re-charge devices, do NOT keep the car running in a garage, partially enclosed space, or close to a home, this can lead to carbon monoxide poisoning.
- Learn about the emergency plans that have been established in your area by visiting your state's or local website so you can locate the closest cooling and warming shelters.
- If you rely on anything that is battery-operated or power dependent like a medical device determine a back-up plan.

## During a Power Outage: Safety Tips

- Only use flashlights for emergency lighting, candles can cause fires.
- Keep refrigerator and freezer doors closed. Most food requiring refrigeration can be kept safely in a closed refrigerator for several hours. An unopened refrigerator will keep food cold for about 4 hours. A full freezer will keep the temperature for about 48 hours. For more information about food safety visit our food page.
- Put on layers of warm clothing if it is cold outside. Never burn charcoal for heating or cooking indoors. Never use your oven as a source of heat. If the power may be out for a prolonged period, plan to go to another location (the home of a relative or friend, or a public facility) that has heat to keep warm.
- Turn off or disconnect appliances and other equipment in case of a momentary power "surge" that can damage computers and other devices. Consider adding surge protectors.
- If you are considering purchasing a generator for your home, consult an electrician or engineer before purchasing and installing.
- Only use generators away from your home and NEVER run a generator inside a home or garage, or connect it to your home's electrical system.

## After a Power Outage

- 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!
- If food in the freezer is colder than 40° F and has ice crystals on it, you can refreeze it.
- Contact your doctor if you're concerned about medications having spoiled.
- Restock your emergency kit with fresh batteries, canned foods and other supplies.

Visit [www.ready.gov](http://www.ready.gov) for more information.