

## **Preparing for Big Storms and Power Outages**

### **Tips to Minimize Impact**

Minimize the impact of outages by preparing in advance:

- Keep the power company's number that services you, listed with your other emergency numbers and close at hand.
- Have a few good flashlights around the house, kept in places where you can easily find them in the dark, and make sure you have fresh batteries on hand as well. A battery-powered radio is also a good idea.
- Candles and matches are also important. Remember to use candle holders and handle them carefully.
- Keep a few blankets and some water on hand. Always have some non-perishable food in your pantry -- food that doesn't need to be kept cool and that can be eaten without cooking.
- If you use computers or other sensitive electronic equipment, you may wish to equip them with surge suppressors or other devices to protect them from the power fluctuations that may accompany outages. If the loss of computer data could be expensive or difficult to replace, you may also wish to consider purchasing an uninterruptible power supply (UPS), a unit that can maintain power supply to your equipment for some time after an outage begins.

### **Tips for a Big Storm**

If you hear of a major storm headed your way, a longer outage could result. There are several steps you can take when a blizzard, hurricane or other major storm approaches.

- Turn controls on refrigerators to their coldest setting. Then, if an outage occurs, unplug the refrigerator. A fully-loaded freezer will keep food frozen for up to two days if its door isn't opened.

- If your water is pumped by electricity, fill bathtubs, bottles and other containers with water before a storm.
- You can burn wood or coal in a fireplace or stove to help keep warm. But don't start a fire until the house temperature has dropped noticeably.
- Have several blankets on hand. Two or three layers of medium to light-weight bed coverings will keep you warmer than a single heavy quilt. The same principle applies to clothing.
- If possible, store supplies of food that require no cooking. And make sure your flashlights and radio have fresh batteries.

Severe weather and equipment problems can cause outages despite best efforts. If you and others have lost power, and you are serviced by Dominion Energy, call toll-free at 1-866-366-4357. The fastest way to report an outage is by using the automated voice system that will answer your call.

Article Source

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Last Reviewed

Tuesday, September 15, 2020