



Preparing for possible power outages

- Store a good supply of dry, seasoned wood for your fireplace or wood-burning stove.
 - Always keep a flashlight and battery powered lanterns on hand along with extra batteries.
 - Turn off or disconnect any appliances or electronics you were using when the power went out.
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- Leave one light turned on so you'll know when your power returns.
 - Consider your entertainment options - especially if you have kids! - (and if you have enough light) playing cards, books, board games, hand-held battery powered games

Keep fire extinguishers on hand, and make sure everyone in your house knows how to use them. House fires pose an additional risk, as more people turn to alternate heating sources without taking the necessary safety precautions.

Maintain at least a half tank of gas because gas stations rely on electricity to power their pumps.

Power outages affect many kinds of equipment: Today, we depend on many kinds of equipment that rely on electricity, including some you may not have thought about. Computers, certain telephone systems, certain types of WATER HEATERS, some smoke alarms, security systems and elevators are just a few of the items that may not work during a power outage.

If you have an electric garage door opener or security gate, find out where the manual release lever is located and learn how to operate it. Sometimes garage doors and gates can be heavy, so get help to lift it. If you regularly use the garage as the primary means of entering your home upon return from work, **be sure to keep a key to your house with you**, in case the garage door will not open.

Protect sensitive equipment and data

Protect computers and related equipment such as printers or modems, and other electronic equipment with surge suppressors and uninterruptible power supplies (UPSs). If power goes out, a UPS provides battery power at a constant voltage for several minutes, allowing you to safely turn off equipment with minimal risk of data loss.

During an outage, turn off all electronic equipment. This will help prevent or minimize damage from a possible over voltage condition when power is restored.

Back up critical data often, making partial backups weekly or daily and complete backups on a regular schedule. Store backup copies in a secure, fireproof location off-site.

Plan how to communicate during a power outage

Don't rely on cordless phones, answering machines, or phones connected to answering machines—all need electricity to operate. Keep at least one non-electrically powered telephone. Having at least one non-electrically powered telephone will also enable you to receive emergency notifications via reverse 9-1-1 if it is utilized.

Use the phone for emergencies only. Listening to a portable radio can provide the latest information. Do not call 9-1-1 for information -- only call to report a life-threatening emergency

If your electricity goes off

- Look to see if your neighbors are also without power.
- If everyone else has power, check your fuse box or service panel to determine if the problem is internal.
- Call the Southern California Edison, **1-800-611-1911** to report the location of the power outage. (DO NOT call 9-1-1 for information or to ask how long the power will be out - we don't know.)
- Do not run a generator inside a home or garage. If you use a generator, connect the equipment you want to power directly to the outlets on the generator. Do not connect a generator to a home's electrical system.
- Turn to a local station on your battery-operated radio. If the power outage is extensive or there are rotating outages, there will be announcements on local stations.
- Leave the doors of your refrigerator and freezer closed to keep your food as fresh as possible. Most modern refrigerators will maintain adequate cooling for over six hours if doors are not opened. If you must eat food that was refrigerated or frozen, check it carefully for signs of spoilage.
- Never burn charcoal for heating or cooking indoors.
- If you see a power line or utility pole that has fallen, **STAY AWAY**. Live power lines can cause serious injury or even kill you. Dial 9-1-1 to report the downed power line.
- Eliminate unnecessary travel, especially by car. Traffic signals will stop working during an outage, creating traffic congestion.
- Remember that equipment such as automated teller machines (ATMs) and elevators may not work during a power outage.

Specific Information for People With Disabilities

- If you or someone you know uses a battery-operated wheelchair, life-support system, or other power-dependent equipment, call your power company and ask them what alternatives are available in your area.
- If you use or know someone who uses a motorized wheelchair or scooter, have an extra battery. A car battery also can be used with a wheelchair but will not last as long as a wheelchair's deep-cycle battery. If available, store a lightweight manual wheelchair for backup.
- If you are or know someone who is blind or has a visual disability, store a talking or Braille clock or large-print timepiece with extra batteries.
- If you are or know someone who is deaf or has a hearing loss, consider getting a small portable battery-operated television set. Emergency broadcasts may give information in American Sign Language (ASL) or open captioning.