



# ELECTRICAL OUTAGES AND HOME SAFETY



*Are you prepared if the power goes out?*

## IF THE POWER GOES OUT:

1. **Check your fuse or breaker box** for blown fuses or tripped circuits. If they are okay, see if neighbors are without power.
2. **Call your utility** immediately. You may be asked for information, or hear a message if the situation has already been reported.
3. **Turn off** all electrical equipment (e.g., water heater, electric furnace, heaters, stove, washer, dryer, TV ) to prevent overloading the system when power is restored.
4. **Turn on** a porch light and one inside light so you and utility crews will know when service is restored.
5. **Listen to the radio** (battery-powered) for updates on major electrical outages.
6. If your neighbors' power comes back on but yours does not, call your utility company again.

### Important Information when Reporting a Power Outage

- Name and address
- Time of outage
- Are lights out, flickering or dim?
- Are the neighbors' lights out?
- Were there loud noises preceding the outage?
- Have any wires fallen to the ground?
- Tree limbs on lines?

Crews may have to remove limbs, replace broken insulators or fuses, and close circuit breakers. The more serious the problem, the longer it will take to restore service.

### EMERGENCY LIGHTING:

**Flashlights:** Each person should have their own flashlight. Store extra bulbs and batteries.

**Lightsticks:** Self-contained chemical lights that activate by bending. Work well as night-lights for children.

**Candles:** Can be dangerous. Set in low wide cans. Keep away from curtains and flammable furniture and out of the reach of children and pets.

## DOWNED POWER LINES

If you see a power line lying on the ground, don't touch it with anything - stay back. Call your utility company immediately. Keep people and pets away.

**NEVER** touch a downed power line. Electricity can travel through your body, causing serious injury or death. If you see a downed power line, take these precautions:

- Expect every power line to be "live." Electricity is invisible. The line doesn't have to spark or sizzle to carry electricity.
- If a power line is touching someone, stay away - you cannot help. If you touch the person, you could become a victim, too.
- Call 9-1-1 for emergency help!
- If a power line falls across your vehicle, don't get out! Wait for emergency help to arrive.

## HOUSEHOLD TIPS:



### EMERGENCY KIT CHECK LIST

- Lantern/Candles & matches
- Battery-powered radio
- Paper plates/plastic utensils
- Manual can opener
- Bottled drinking water
- Flashlight
- First aid kit
- Extra batteries
- Firewood/kindling
- Gas camp stove/BBQ (never use indoors)
- Battery or wind-up alarm clock



### STAYING WARM:

Outages can occur at any time of year; but during cold weather, the temperature inside your home can drop rapidly. Tips for staying warm:

**Save Body Heat** - Wear a hat, even while sleeping. Wear loose layers of clothing to trap body heat. Use blankets and a hot water bottle if you are able to heat water.

**Lock in Home Heat** - Pick one room (on the sunny side of the house) and close it off to keep the heat in.

Watch for **Hypothermia** (a drop in core body temperature), especially in infants and elderly. Symptoms include slow, slurred speech, clumsiness, confusion and/or persistent shivering. Call 9-1-1 if you suspect hypothermia. Remember to check on isolated friends and neighbors.

Your **Freezer** will keep food frozen during an outage for about two days if it's full, one day if it's less than half-full. Don't open the door. It also helps to cover the freezer with blankets.

**Protect your Pipes:** If the power is out and the weather is freezing, keep a steady drip of cold water on inside faucets and wrap pipes to prevent damage. Open cabinet doors to warm pipes that are near exterior walls.

**Automatic Garage Door Openers** won't work if the power is out. Check to see if you have a manual override.

**Home Computers:** Install a surge protector (not just a power strip) to protect your computer from power surges.

**Charcoal Briquettes:** Never use briquettes indoors. They produce carbon monoxide, which can be deadly.

**Generators:** Never connect a home generator to a wall outlet. If used incorrectly, portable or auxiliary generators used for backup power at home can ruin your electrical system and start a fire and can also feed electricity back into the utility system. This is very dangerous for crews repairing lines.

### WHO TO CALL TO REPORT A POWER OUTAGE IN McMinnville:

McMinnville Water & Light (503)472-6158