Power Outages

Follow these guidelines to be prepared for power outages.

• Know where your flashlight and batteries are—and be able to easily access them. Consider purchasing battery-operated lanterns for additional light sources.

• Decide which room of the house is easiest to keep warm, and close doors to other rooms. When the power goes out, keep outside doors closed, and close drapes at night to retain heat. If you don’t have drapes, hang blankets over windows. Stuff cracks around doors with rugs, newspapers, or towels.

• If you have a gas heater, keep it in good working order. Know how to safely use the heater. If you have a gas or wood-burning fireplace or a wood-burning stove, keep it in good working condition. Maintain a distance of 3 feet between your heat source and flammable objects. Have a supply of wood on hand.

• If you have a generator, keep it in good working order. Have a supply of fuel on hand. Keep generators outside. Using them in an enclosed space can kill you.

• Check for easy access to your gas or charcoal grill if you’ve stored it for the season. Check your fuel supplies. Gas and charcoal grills are intended for outdoor use; do not use them indoors.

• Prevent frozen or broken pipes by insulating exposed pipes. During a power outage, open kitchen and bathroom cabinet doors to allow warmer air to circulate around the pipes.

• Check insulation in attics, basements, and crawl spaces. Adequate insulation helps maintain your home’s heat.

• Make sure you can access your first aid kit and fire extinguisher.

• Restock food and water supplies, especially items that require no cooking or refrigeration.

• Keep your car’s fuel tank full.

This document is part of a larger publication titled Emergency Preparedness Manual (ACES-2168).