

Living Without Power

Plan ahead so that if the power goes out you will know other ways to cook, foods to select, how to get light, how to communicate, how to keep cool (or warm), how to get water, and how to live without a sewer or septic system.

Cooking

- ◆ You can cook on a camp stove, charcoal or propane gas grill, wood stove, or outdoor fire. Indoors, you can cook in a fireplace if the chimney has not been damaged or clogged by debris. Make sure the chimney damper is open. With a portable generator, you will be able to use small electrical appliances.
- ◆ Never use camp stoves or grills indoors.
- ◆ If you build a fire on the ground, make sure it is contained, with a ring of stones or metal drum around the fire bed. Build fires well away from buildings, and never in a carport. Sparks can easily get into the ceiling and start a fire.
- ◆ Never use gasoline to start a wood or charcoal fire.
- ◆ Tend fires carefully and put them out when you have finished cooking.

Water

- ◆ If your home's water supply is cut off, bottled water should be available from local emergency supply distribution points. Each person needs 1 gallon per day.
- ◆ Water in toilet tanks (not the bowls) can be used for drinking after treatment, if cleaning chemicals are not placed in the tanks. You can also drain water from the water heater (make sure the power is off first).

Suggested foods

- ◆ If you have no running water, buy foods that require little or no water in preparation. Choose low-salt foods to help minimize thirst.

- ◆ Many foods need no cooking—breakfast cereal, granola bars, cookies, crackers, jerky, ready-to-eat meats in cans or pouches, canned vegetables, peanut butter, trail mix, canned meals such as spaghetti/pasta, canned infant formula, and baby/toddler foods in jars.
- ◆ Open only as much of these foods as you will need for one meal to avoid the need for refrigeration.
- ◆ Choose foods that your family will eat during this stressful time. Be sure everyone eats enough to remain healthy.
- ◆ Hard candy will help keep the mouth moist if water supplies are limited.
- ◆ Take vitamins if you have them.
- ◆ Buy nonperishable (dry) foods for your pets.

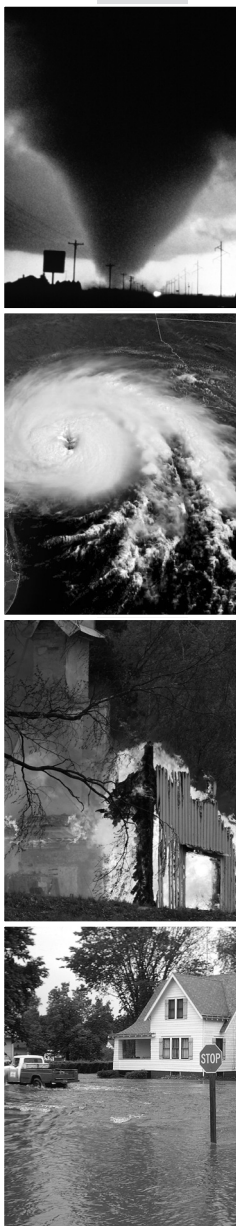
Food storage and preparation supplies

- ◆ Manual can opener
- ◆ Metal pans and cooking utensils for cooking on a fire or grill
- ◆ Aluminum foil and plastic wrap
- ◆ Plastic forks, knives, and spoons
- ◆ Paper napkins and plates
- ◆ Storage bags for food
- ◆ Paper towels
- ◆ Garbage bags for disposing of trash
- ◆ Ice chest—ice will probably be available at an emergency supply distribution center

Lights and communication

- ◆ Have a flashlight and batteries (all the same size) for every member of the family.
- ◆ Use direct current-powered lights, solar rechargeable lamps, oil or kerosene lamps, or candles (with caution) as alternatives to electric light.
- ◆ Each home should have one phone that is connected to the wall (not a portable/cell phone), as well as a solar or DC charger for cell phones.

continued



Living Without Power continued

- ◆ With a battery-powered, crank, short-wave, or citizens band radio, you will be able to hear news reports and public announcements.
- ◆ Stay connected to the Internet with a satellite Internet hookup and a battery-powered laptop computer.

Cooling

- ◆ Use battery-powered fans, solar fans, window shades, neck wraps saturated in water, and hats with brims to stay cool and protect from sunburn. Open windows if they are screened.

Toilet facilities

- ◆ Make a toilet from a bucket lined with a garbage bag. Or use a portable camping toilet. Bury the waste.