

Before an Outage

Check flashlights and portable radios to ensure that they are working, and you have extra batteries as part of your [Emergency Kit](#) . A radio is an important source of weather and emergency information during a storm.

- If a storm is coming that may bring power outages, fully charge your cell phone, laptop, and any other devices in advance of a power outage.
- Keep extra batteries for your phone in a safe place or purchase a solar-powered or hand crank charger. These chargers are good emergency tools to keep your laptop and other small electronics working in the event of a power outage. If you own a car, purchase a car phone charger because you can charge your phone if you lose power at your home.
- If a storm is coming that may bring power outages and you have a water supply (such as a well-water pump system) that could be affected by a power outage, fill your bathtub and spare containers with water. Water in the bathtub should be used for sanitation purposes only, not as drinking water. Pouring a pail of water from the tub directly into the bowl can flush a toilet.
- Set your refrigerator and freezer to their coldest settings (remember to reset them back to normal once power is restored). During an outage, do not open the refrigerator or freezer door. Food can stay cold in a full refrigerator for up to 24 hours, and in a well-packed freezer for 48 hours (24 hours if it is half-packed).
- If you have medication that requires refrigeration, check with your pharmacist for guidance on proper storage during an extended outage.
- If you use medical equipment in your home that requires electricity, talk to your health care provider about how you can prepare for its use during a power outage. Ensure you have extra batteries for medical equipment and assistive devices.
- If you have life-support devices that depend on electricity, contact your local electric company about your power needs for life-support devices (home dialysis, suction, breathing machines, etc.) in advance of an emergency. Some utility companies will put you on a "priority reconnection service" list. Talk to your equipment suppliers about your power options and also let the fire department know that you are dependent on life-support devices.
- Keep your car tank at least half full because gas stations rely on electricity to power their pumps.