



York Region Emergency Management Fact Sheet

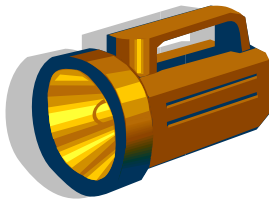
Preparing and Responding to a Power Outage

BEFORE YOUR POWER GOES OUT...

Make an emergency kit and keep it readily accessible.

Your kit should include:

- Important telephone numbers (including: non-emergency numbers for police, fire department, family physician, area hospital and local utility companies)
- Battery-powered or wind-up flashlight (and extra batteries)
- Candles and proper candleholders, matches or a barbeque butane lighter
- Battery-powered or wind-up radio



- A supply of non-perishable food items
- Manual can opener
- A supply of bottled water (at least four litres per person per day)
- Warm clothes and blankets
- Medications (both prescription and non-prescription)

For more information on preparing an emergency kit, see our Fact Sheet: [Preparing an Emergency Preparedness Kit](#)

Emergency Preparedness Tips:

- Glow-in-the-dark sticks, which can be purchased at most dollar and toy stores, provide an alternative safe light source for children
- If you have a fireplace or woodstove, keep a stock of firewood
- You should have at least one traditional (corded) telephone in your house, as cordless phones do not work in a power outage
- Gas and charcoal barbecues should **NEVER** be used indoors, as they are a fire and safety hazard, and can give off deadly carbon monoxide.
- Portable stoves, lamps and other camping equipment are useful to have in the event of a power outage.
- Store fuel for these items in a shed or garage, away from your house. (Many fuels can give off combustible vapours and should never be stored in your home)
- If you have an electric garage door opener, make sure there is an emergency release handle and learn how to operate the door without power
- Have coolers or ice chests on hand (inexpensive styrofoam coolers will work) and a supply of ice for food storage in the event of a long-term power outage
- Install surge protectors in your home to safeguard valuable electronic equipment such as computers and home entertainment systems
- Know where to find utility shut offs – electricity, water and gas – in the event you need to turn any of these off or to direct utility company personnel



- ❑ Make sure you have at least half a tank of fuel in your vehicle at all times. Gas pumps are electrically operated and gas stations will shut down during a power outage



DURING A POWER OUTAGE:

- ❑ First check to see if your neighbours have power. If you are the only home without electricity, check the electrical panel to see if the main circuit breaker has been tripped. If your neighbours don't have electricity either, then you know there has likely been a power outage in your area
- ❑ If you are on a home oxygen system or other life sustaining equipment, contact the service provider (vendor) to learn the details of their emergency contingency plan in the event of a power outage
- ❑ Turn off all major non-essential appliances such as your electric range and washer/dryer. Appliances and tools left switched on will start up automatically when your power is restored. Turning them off prevents injury or fire
- ❑ Turn off all lights but one (so you can tell when power has been restored)
- ❑ Unplug sensitive electronic equipment such as your computer and home entertainment systems. This will reduce the chance of damage due to electrical surges once power has been restored
- ❑ Keep your refrigerator and freezer doors closed to preserve the cold inside
- ❑ Use bottled water during a power outage if you depend on a well and an electric pump to draw water.

GENERATOR SAFETY:

- ❑ Never operate a gas-powered electric generator inside your home, basement, garage or any other enclosed area.
- ❑ A generator needs an unlimited supply of fresh air for proper cooling during operation – a minimum of 3 to 4 feet of spacing on all sides (including the top surface)
- ❑ Locate your generator sufficiently away from open doors and windows which can allow dangerous exhaust fumes and carbon monoxide to enter your home.
- ❑ Keep the generator dry and always operate it on a level surface
- ❑ **NEVER** add fuel to your generator when it is running and always store additional fuel in approved gasoline containers
- ❑ **NEVER** feed power from your generator into a wall outlet. This can damage your home's wiring system and cause a fire
- ❑ Use a high-grade extension cord and surge protector to connect the generator to the appliances that you want to power

WHEN POWER IS RESTORED:

- ❑ Turn on only the most essential appliances first. Wait 10 to 15 minutes before reconnecting other appliances to avoid overloading your household electrical system
- ❑ Check your fridge and freezer to ensure they are operating properly
- ❑ Discard any food that may have spoiled – especially dairy and meat products and condiments such as mayonnaise and salad dressing
- ❑ Don't forget to reset your clocks, timers, and alarms
- ❑ Replace any items from your Emergency Kit which you may have used so you are prepared for future emergencies

