

Winter Storm Preparedness Checklist

Your co-op's mission is to provide members with reliable service – day and night. But severe weather can cause a power outage that can last for hours or days. Snow and ice can seriously damage electrical equipment. We've created a list of suggestions that can help you during an extended outage.

Stock the pantry

The CDC recommends having several days' supply of food that does not need to be cooked handy. Keep your pantry adequately stocked with a three-day supply of non-perishable food that doesn't need to be cooked. Some essentials you may want to buy in advance of an impending winter storm:

- Bottled water (1 gallon per person per day for 5 days)
- Shelf-stable juice
- Bread
- Cereal
- Snacks like cookies and crackers in sealed packages
- Peanut butter
- Canned ready-to-eat meats such as tuna
- Hard cheeses (wax sealed)
- Nuts
- Dried fruit
- Granola and energy bars
- Jerky

And while you're stocking up, don't forget these essentials:

- Disposable cups, plates and utensils
- Paper towels and toilet paper
- Pet food
- Sand, rock salt or non-clumping kitty litter (to make walkways and steps less slippery)
- Baby supplies (if there's an infant in the home)
- Batteries
- Matches or lighter

Assemble an emergency kit

Be sure that your family has an emergency kit that contains the following:

- Charged cell phone
- Battery-powered radio
- Flashlights
- Manual can opener
- Solar chargers or portable power banks
- First aid kit

- A kerosene or propane space heater rated for indoor use
- Thermal emergency blankets
- Prescription medications (7-day supply) and medical items (hearing aids with extra batteries, glasses, contact lenses, syringes, cane)
- Multi-purpose tool
- Alternative heating source and fuel for it
- Extra cash (ATMs and store cash registers don't work when electricity is out)
- Family and emergency contact information (including your co-op account number and outage reporting information)
- Extra winter clothing, including coats, hats and gloves

Other important considerations

- If your family has a backup generator, make sure that you replace old fuel that may have already gone stale, and top off your fuel supply. Ensure that it is up-to-date on maintenance like filters, oil changes and spark plugs. Also, ensure extension cords are in good shape and rated for generator use.
- Winterize your vehicle and keep the gas tank full. A full tank will keep the fuel line from freezing.
- Plan to use a safe alternate heating source, such as a fireplace or wood-burning stove. Remember: Never leave the heating source unattended. Fuel- and wood-burning sources of heat should always be properly ventilated. Always read the manufacturer's directions before using alternative heating sources of any kind.