



BEFORE THE STORM

TIPS AND A CHECKLIST TO KEEP YOU COMFORTABLE AND SAFE

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With the winter storm season upon us again, it is important to review steps to prepare for the next big storm. Having what you need and knowing what to do when a storm knocks the power out can make an uncomfortable situation tolerable, and may even save your life.

- ☐ **Check medications that require refrigeration.** Be sure you know if they will be affected by a prolonged interruption of power. You may want to talk with your pharmacist. You may also want to keep a small cooler handy.
- ☐ **Put refrigerator and freezer at coldest settings.** Do this a half day or so before the storm is scheduled to hit. Keep a blanket handy to throw over these appliances for added insulation, if need be. (Be sure to return the settings to their normal position as soon as the crisis has passed.)
- ☐ **Set aside water.** This is vital if you depend on a water pump that might be disabled during a storm. Sanitize and fill spare containers with water for drinking. Plan on one gallon per person with enough for three days. Fill your bathtub with water for use in the toilet. A bucket of water poured in the toilet bowl is all that's needed for flushing. If for any reason you don't have an adequate supply of water, and are unable to get enough from friends or neighbors, call your municipal officials (including town clerk, police or fire station) to ask about nearby water sources.

EMERGENCY GENERATOR SAFETY

If you own a back-up generator to supply your home or business with power during an outage, it is critical for your safety and the safety of our employees that your equipment is properly installed. Improperly installed generators can cause fires and feed electricity back into the power lines, endangering the lives of your neighbors, the public and PSNH lineworkers. In addition, you may be liable for damage or injury to people and property that may result from an improperly installed or operated emergency generator.

Disconnect First!

It is a requirement that a transfer switch be installed to prevent back-feeding electricity into the PSNH system. A transfer switch ensures that the PSNH power supply coming into your home or business is disconnected before you connect and operate your generator. Likewise, when returning to PSNH services, a transfer switch will make sure your generator is disconnected before reconnecting to the PSNH supply. PSNH recommends that each customer consult with a licensed electrician regarding installation of an appropriate transfer switch.

Additional Emergency Generator Safety Tips:

- Never operate generators inside of the home, garage, basement, crawl space, carport, enclosed/partially enclosed space, or near doors and windows.
- Store fuel for generators in properly labeled containers kept away from living areas and fuel-burning appliances.
- Carbon monoxide detectors with battery backup should be used in nearby enclosed spaces to monitor levels.
- Make sure that extension cords used with generators are rated for the load, are free of cuts or worn insulation, have three prongs and preferably one with a ground fault circuit interrupter (GFCI).

If you have further questions about the safe use of your emergency generator, please contact your local building or electrical inspector, or fire department.

- ☐ **Prepare alternative sources of heat.** Even a gas or oil furnace needs electricity to operate, so if you have a fireplace or wood stove as an alternative heat source (and you've had your chimney inspected), be sure you have enough wood.

A portable electric generator can be a valuable backup source of power to operate your furnace and appliances—as long as it is installed and operated correctly. See “Emergency Generator Safety” for important information on generating your own electricity.

In frigid weather, if your power is likely to be out for more than a few days, you may want to call your plumber and ask about draining your home's water pipes so they don't freeze and burst.

And if you have no alternative heat, you can call your local fire or police department or local Red Cross chapter to locate an emergency shelter, if needed.

- ☐ **Stock up on batteries and easy-to-prepare food.** Give yourself the greatest flexibility in meal preparation, and the greatest comfort once the sun goes down. Don't forget flashlights (one for each person in your family), batteries, and a manual can opener.

- ☐ **Keep your cell phone fully charged.** And don't forget that if you have a car charger, you can use that to recharge your phone for as long as power remains out in your home.

- ☐ **Plan to live without everyday tools that need electricity.** Your garage door opener, for example. Be sure you know how to get the door open and shut manually.
And if you keep your cellar free from flooding by using an electric sump pump, be prepared to call your local fire department for help if you lose power for very long.

- ☐ **Check local news and weather channels for critical information.** Then be sure to keep a battery-operated radio handy. Stay informed with the storm's progress, as well as safety tips and clean-up operations. Don't forget fresh batteries.
- ☐ **Remember: stay away from downed power lines.**

Keep your distance from any downed power line.

Don't drive over downed lines, and if a downed line is in or near water, keep your distance from the water, even a little puddle.

And whether a power line is down or not, don't touch anything that might be in contact with it—like a tree limb, for example.

PSNH POWER RESTORATION PROCESS

Our line crews work around-the-clock to restore service

In the case of a power outage, possible high priority customers are reconnected first. Typically, this includes hospitals, nursing homes, police and fire stations, and shelters. Major circuits and lines serving the largest concentrations of people are repaired next. Once major lines are repaired, lines feeding off these circuits can be repaired. Progress typically slows at this stage because power loss to individual residences can occur for a variety of reasons.



STORM SUPPLY CHECKLIST

- ✓ Flashlights
- ✓ Battery-operated radio
- ✓ Fresh batteries
- ✓ Water
- ✓ Manual can opener
- ✓ Non-perishable Food
- ✓ Firewood, if appropriate
- ✓ Cooler for medications needing refrigeration

Supporting Your Life in Every Moment.



**Public Service
of New Hampshire**

The Northeast Utilities System

Visit psnh.com for more storm safety tips.

