

HOME SECURITY DURING A POWER OUTAGE

Quick Checklist for Safer Grid-Down Preparedness

Use this checklist to prepare your home before an outage and quickly review priorities when the power goes out. Focus on life safety first, then security, communications and household needs.

BEFORE AN OUTAGE

- Inspect exterior doors, deadbolts, strike plates, windows and garage entry points
- Learn how to operate and secure the garage door manually
- Test alarm-system, camera, smart-lock and internet backup capabilities
- Install useful battery-powered or solar exterior lighting
- Test smoke and carbon monoxide alarms and check battery backup
- Charge phones, rechargeable lights and power banks
- Keep emergency contacts written down as well as stored digitally
- Store drinking water, shelf-stable food, first-aid supplies and needed medications
- Organize important documents and make an evacuation plan

WHEN THE POWER GOES OUT

- Check first for fire, smoke, gas odors, flooding, downed lines or electrical damage
- Determine whether the outage affects only your home or the surrounding area
- Set up flashlights, headlamps and lanterns in key locations
- Check and secure normal doors, accessible windows and garage access
- Confirm phones and communication methods are working
- Monitor utility information, weather alerts and official emergency instructions
- Account for everyone in the household and review the plan

HOME SECURITY

- Keep doors and windows locked and repair weak or damaged hardware before emergencies
- Use exterior lighting strategically without relying on utility power
- Close curtains or blinds when appropriate after dark
- Avoid publicly posting that your home is empty or describing stored emergency supplies
- Keep hallways and emergency exits clear
- If suspicious activity occurs, prioritize distance and contacting authorities over confrontation

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LIGHTING & COMMUNICATIONS

- Keep more than one independent light source available
- Place a flashlight or headlamp near sleeping areas
- Keep a lantern in a main living area or kitchen
- Conserve phone and power-bank capacity for important communication
- Keep a battery-powered or hand-crank emergency radio available
- Know which cameras, alarms and smart devices stop working without Wi-Fi or household power

FIRE & CARBON MONOXIDE SAFETY

- Use battery-powered lighting instead of candles whenever practical
- Never operate a portable generator inside a house, garage, basement, crawlspace or shed
- Keep generator exhaust away from doors, windows, vents and occupied buildings
- Never use charcoal grills or outdoor combustion equipment indoors
- Use cooking and heating equipment only as permitted by the manufacturer
- If a carbon monoxide alarm sounds, move to fresh air and follow emergency guidance

LONGER OUTAGES

- Keep refrigerator and freezer doors closed as much as possible
- Monitor indoor temperatures during extreme heat or cold
- Conserve batteries and backup power
- Check stored water and follow local water advisories
- Keep first-aid supplies and work gloves accessible
- Check on vulnerable household members and trusted neighbors when safe
- Keep your vehicle reasonably fueled and ready if relocation becomes necessary

WHEN TO LEAVE

- Leave or seek emergency help for fire, gas leaks, dangerous carbon monoxide conditions or structural hazards
- Follow mandatory evacuation orders and official emergency instructions
- Relocate if indoor heat or cold becomes unsafe
- Have at least two possible destinations in mind before an emergency
- Keep a small evacuation bag ready so you do not start from zero

REMEMBER: A blackout does not require turning your home into a fortress. Strong doors, reliable lighting, working alarms, organized supplies, communication and a practiced family plan provide practical layers of protection.