



How to Handle a Power Outage in Cold Weather

Severe winter weather can cause power outages and loss of heat. Here are some tips on how to help handle an outage during the winter.

Before the storm

- Set your refrigerator and freezer to coldest settings.
- Check flashlights and portable radios.
- Be sure to have extra batteries on hand.
- Fully charge electronics, including cell phones, tablets and laptops.
- Ensure smoke and carbon monoxide detectors are working correctly and have fresh batteries.
- Prepare generators and other alternative heating supplies. Start them to ensure they are working.
- For those with well water, fill your bathtub with water to help replace the water after flushing.
- Get out extra blankets, coats, hats and mittens.

During the outage

- Check with your power company for updates. Many have outage maps and information on their websites.
- Use 911 for true emergencies only.
- Use flashlights, instead of candles, as much as possible.
- Take safety precautions when using a generator. Never run generators indoors where carbon monoxide can cause harm.
- Dress warmly, in layers.

- If you lose your heat, close the doors of unused rooms and place towels under the doors. At night, cover windows with shades, extra blankets or sheets.
- Unplug sensitive electronics to protect them from surges when power is restored.
- Know and watch for signs of frostbite and hypothermia.

After the outage

- Be careful around downed power lines. Assume they are live and never touch them or drive over them.
- Throw away foods that have been exposed to greater than 40 degree temperatures for more than two hours.
- Safely put back all items, such as flashlights, batteries, candles, generators, to have them ready for the future.

Sources: Massachusetts Emergency Management Agency,
The Hanover Risk Management



Be sure to have the phone numbers of your independent insurance agent and insurance company should you need to file a claim.