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POWER OUTAGE QUICK PLAN

Food safety times, generator safety and a first-hour checklist

Food safety: fridge and freezer

- **Keep doors closed.** Refrigerator keeps food safe about **4 hours** without power.
- A full freezer holds about **48 hours**; half-full about **24 hours** (door closed).
- Put an appliance thermometer in each now. Food is safe at 40°F or below.
- After 4 hours, discard refrigerated meat, poultry, fish, eggs, milk, cooked leftovers and cut produce.
- Frozen food with ice crystals or at 40°F or below can be refrozen or cooked.
- **When in doubt, throw it out.** Never taste food to check.

Generator carbon monoxide safety

- Run generators **outside only**, never in a home, garage, basement or shed, even with doors or windows open.
- Keep at least **20 feet** from any window, door or vent.
- Use battery-powered or battery-backup CO alarms in your home.
- Symptoms: headache, dizziness, weakness, upset stomach, vomiting, chest pain, confusion. Move to fresh air and call 911. Poison Help: 1-800-222-1222.

FIRST HOUR

- ☐ Flashlights out. Avoid candles when you can.
- ☐ Unplug sensitive electronics and major appliances; leave one lamp on to see when power returns.
- ☐ Check on neighbors, older adults and anyone on medical equipment.
- ☐ Note the time power went out: _____
- ☐ Report the outage to your utility. Utility phone: _____
- ☐ Fill a few containers with water if you are on a well pump.

SUPPLIES TO HAVE READY

- ☐ Flashlights, extra batteries
- ☐ Battery or hand-crank radio
- ☐ Phone power bank, charged
- ☐ Water, 1 gallon per person per day
- ☐ Non-perishable food, manual can opener
- ☐ Appliance thermometers
- ☐ Cooler and ice or frozen gel packs
- ☐ 7 days of medicines, list of medical needs
- ☐ Blankets, warm layers (winter) or fans, water (summer)
- ☐ Cash
- ☐ CO alarm with battery backup
- ☐ Gas in the car, at least half a tank

OUTAGE LOG

Time (clock)	Fridge temp F	Freezer temp F	Food decision	Notes

Key numbers. Utility: _____ Medical device supplier: _____ Neighbor: _____

Sources: USDA FSIS and FoodSafety.gov, "Food Safety During Power Outages" and "Keep Food Safe During an Emergency"; CDC, "Carbon Monoxide Poisoning Basics" and "Safe Generator Use". Dates checked 11/16/2026.

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