National Preparedness Month Week 4: Power Outage

The biggest Power Outage in U.S. history occurred on August 14, 2003, leaving roughly 50 million people without power. Power outages, or blackouts, can happen anywhere...and to anyone.

Before a Power Outage:

diamond Conserve energy to keep the use of electricity as low as possible.

diamond Fill plastic containers with water and put them in the refrigerator and freezer (leave an inch of space for expansion). This will help keep food cold during a temporary power outage.

diamond Most medication that requires refrigeration can be kept in a closed fridge for several hours-check with your physician.

diamond Keep your car tank at least half full.

diamond Keep cash on hand (small bills).

diamond Know how to work the manual release lever of your electric garage door opener.

diamond If you enter your home through the garage, keep a house key with you.

diamond People with access and/or functional needs

- Contact your power company and local fire department to inform them of your special needs
- Have extra batteries for wheelchairs/scooters (car batteries can be used). Have a lightweight manual wheelchair.
- Have a talking or Braille clock or large-print timepiece (extra batteries) if you are blind or have a visual disability.

During a Power Outage:

diamond Use only flashlights, NEVER use candles due to extreme risk of fire.

diamond Keep fridge and freezer doors closed. Check all food carefully for signs of spoilage.

diamond Turn off/disconnect appliances, equipment or electronics in use when the power went out.

diamond Do not run a generator inside a home or garage.

diamond Do not connect a generator to a home’s electrical system. Connect equipment directly to the outlets on the generator.

diamond Listen to local radio and to a battery- or generator-powered television for updated information.

diamond Leave on one light so that you’ll know when your power returns.

diamond Use a standard telephone handset that does not require electricity.

diamond If it is hot: At home, stay in the lowest level of your home, since cool air falls. Wear lightweight, light-colored clothing, drink plenty of water, even if you do not feel thirsty. Go to a movie theater, mall or cooling center.

diamond If it is cold: Put on layers of warm clothing, never burn charcoal indoors and never use your oven as a source of heat.

diamond Provide plenty of fresh, cool water for your pets.

diamond Eliminate unnecessary travel, especially by car. Traffic signals will stop working and driving can be dangerous.

diamond Equipment such as automated teller machines (ATMs) and elevators may not work during a power outage.

After a Power Outage: Throw out unsafe food. “When in doubt, throw it out!”