



FEMA

News Release

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HIGH WINDS CUT POWER IN POCKETS ACROSS PACIFIC NW Preparedness Tips When the Lights Go Out

SEATTLE – Strong winds walloped the west coast last night, felling trees, blocking highways and causing sporadic power failures. As utility crews work to restore power, emergency managers urge residents affected by outages to exercise caution and common sense.

“Power outages raise a number of safety concerns as residents seek to light, heat and power their homes from alternative sources,” said FEMA Regional Administrator Ken Murphy. “Emergency power needs can rank right up there with food, water, first aid kits and shelter, but we need to be careful!”

When the power fails, resist the temptation to call 9-1-1 for information—that’s what your battery-powered radio is for. Keep refrigerator and freezer doors closed as much as possible to prevent food spoilage. Turn off electric appliances to protect against power surges when power is restored. Turn off all lights but one (to alert you when power resumes). Plan on cell phones or corded phones for emergency calls—cordless phones require electricity. Keep your car fuel tank at least half-full (gas stations rely on electricity to power their pumps). Candles can be dangerous fire hazards. Flashlights and electric lanterns are safer by far. Battery operated radios and clocks are other essentials, along with a supply of fresh batteries. If electric wheel chairs or electric life support devices are part of the equation, consider extra battery packs or a prearranged agreement from local police or fire stations for priority support.

Never use a portable generator in a garage, carport, basement, crawlspace or other enclosed or partially-enclosed area, even with ventilation. If you start to feel sick, dizzy, or weak while using a generator, get to fresh air immediately. Install home Carbon Monoxide alarms that have battery back-up. Store fuel safely.

When the power comes back on, wait a few minutes before turning on major appliances to help eliminate problems that could occur if there’s a sharp increase in demand. If you think that electric power has been restored to your area but your home is still without power, call your local power company.

FEMA's mission is to support our citizens and first responders to ensure that as a nation we work together to build, sustain, and improve our capability to prepare for, protect against, respond to, recover from, and mitigate all hazards.

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