

POWER OUTAGE PREPAREDNESS

Power outages can be caused by storms, downed trees, wildlife, accidental and intentional human actions, electrical equipment and infrastructure failures, and more.

Is your family or business prepared for a power outage? How would an extended outage affect you? Could you make it on your own for at least three days?

After a disaster, power will first be restored to critical infrastructure like power and water plants, transmission lines, telecommunications networks, and to hospitals, critical care facilities, and emergency response agencies. **It may take several days or even weeks to restore power to individual homeowners and businesses. Are you prepared for such a scenario?**

Before a Power Outage

- Build or restock your emergency preparedness kit (www.ready.gov/kit), including a flashlight, batteries, cash, and first aid supplies.
- Prepare an emergency food supply including canned foods, dry mixes, and other staples that do not require refrigeration, cooking, water, or special preparation. Choose foods your family will eat and store at least a three-day supply of non-perishable food. Additional suggestions at www.ready.gov/food.
- Make sure you have alternative charging methods for your phone or any device that requires power. For more information, visit www.ready.gov/get-tech-ready.
- Charge cell phones and any battery-powered devices.
- Know where the manual release lever of your electric garage door opener is located and how to operate it.
- Purchase ice or freeze water-filled plastic containers to help keep food cold during a temporary power outage.
- Gas stations rely on electricity to power their pumps, so plan accordingly. If you use your car to recharge devices, do NOT keep the car running in a garage, partially enclosed space, or close to a home — this can lead to carbon monoxide poisoning.
- If you rely on anything that is battery-operated or power-dependent, like a medical device, determine a back-up plan. (Additional tips on the reverse side.)

During a Power Outage: Safety Tips

- Stay away from downed power lines/wires and report them by calling 9-1-1.
- Report outages to your electrical utility provider and report whether your neighbors have also lost power. Have your utility account number available, if possible. Check for service restoration status updates using a computer or mobile device. (See more information on reporting a power outage on the reverse side.)
- Use flashlights for emergency lighting, not candles, which can cause fires.
- Keep refrigerator and freezer doors closed. Most food requiring refrigeration can be kept safely in a closed refrigerator for several hours. An unopened refrigerator will keep food cold for about four hours. A full freezer will keep the temperature for about 48 hours.
- Take steps to remain cool if it is hot outside. In intense heat, when the power may be off for a long time, consider going to a movie theater, shopping mall, or “cooling shelter” that may be open. If you remain at home, move to 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.

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- Put on layers of warm clothing if it is cold outside. Never burn charcoal indoors for heating or cooking. Never use your oven as a source of heat. If the power may be out for a prolonged period, plan to go to another location (the home of a relative or friend, or a public facility) that has heat to keep warm.
- Turn off or disconnect appliances and other equipment in case of a momentary power “surge” that can damage computers and other devices. Consider adding surge protectors.
- If you are considering purchasing a generator for your home, consult an electrician or engineer before purchasing and installing.
- Only use generators away from your home. Never run a generator inside a home or garage. Never connect it to your home’s electrical system. Never refuel a generator while it is hot. Turn it off and let it cool down before refueling.

After a Power Outage

- Throw away any food that has been exposed to temperatures above 40° F (4° C) for two hours or more or that has an unusual odor, color, or texture. When in doubt, throw it out!
- If food in the freezer is colder than 40° F and has ice crystals on it, you can refreeze it.
- Contact your pharmacist if you’re concerned about medications having spoiled.
- Restock your emergency kit with fresh batteries, canned foods, and other supplies.

Senior Citizens and Individuals with Disabilities and Others with Access and Functional Needs

Make a plan. After a disaster, you may not have access to a medical facility or even a drugstore, so it’s crucial to plan for the resources you use regularly, and what you would do if those resources are limited or not available.

- Create a support network. Keep a contact list in a watertight container in your emergency kit.
- If you use medical equipment in your home that requires electricity, talk to your doctor or health care provider about how you can prepare for its use during a power outage.
- Wear medical alert tags or bracelets.
- Be ready to explain to first responders that you need to evacuate and choose to go to a shelter with your family, service animal, caregiver, personal assistant, and your assistive technology devices and supplies. Create a Smart911 profile at www.cityofdubuque.org/smart911 (or have a friend or relative create one for you) so local emergency responders have the information they need to better assist you.
- Plan ahead for accessible transportation that you may need for evacuation or getting to a medical clinic.
- For more information for seniors, visit www.ready.gov/seniors. For individuals with disabilities and others with access and functional needs, visit www.ready.gov/individuals-access-functional-needs.

REPORTING A POWER OUTAGE

DO NOT call 9-1-1 to report the outage. Instead, report it to your electrical utility provider. Dubuque is served by Alliant Energy and Maquoketa Valley Electric Cooperative. Never assume someone else has reported a power outage.

Alliant Energy customers have these options to report or monitor an outage.

- **1-800-ALLIANT:** Call 1-800-ALLIANT (800-255-4268)
- **www.alliantenergy.com:** Select “Outages” at the bottom left corner of Alliant’s homepage.
- **Mobile App:** Alliant’s free mobile app is available in Google Play (Android) or App Store (iOS/iPhone) by searching for “Alliant Energy.”
- **Text Alliant:** If you’re enrolled in My Account, text OUT to 255255 to report an outage. If you don’t have My Account, text REG to 255255 to register your mobile device.
- **Interactive Outage Map:** Visit www.alliantenergy.com/outage.
- **My Account,** an online self-service tool at www.alliantenergy.com/myaccount offers “Outage Reporting and Status” in My Account Overview to report an outage.

Maquoketa Valley Electric Cooperative customers have these options:

- Call 1-800-927-6068 during business hours or 1-800-582-8998 outside of normal business hours.
- Visit www.mvec.com/service/report-outage.



In times of emergency, the City of Dubuque uses the CodeRED Emergency Notification System, a free emergency notification service that allows local emergency officials to notify residents and businesses by telephone, cell phone, text message, email, social media, and the CodeRED mobile alert app of emergency situations and time-sensitive news.

Get registered at www.cityofdubuque.org/codered.