CANADA EDITION

POWER OUTAGE PREPAREDNESS

72-Hour Power Outage Kit

What to have, what to do and who to call for the first three days without power. Print it. Keep it with your supplies.

Prep For Outage | prepforoutage.com

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BEFORE YOU READ

How to use this kit

Most outages last hours, not days. This kit covers the first 72 hours in six short sections, each with a checklist you can tick off. Do the checklists now, while the lights are on.

Still the same rule

If someone is hurt, a power line is down, or anyone has headache, dizziness or nausea while using fuel-burning equipment indoors, get everyone outside into fresh air and call 911. You never need to know the cause first.

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How the numbers work

The Government of Canada asks households to be ready to look after themselves for at least 72 hours, with at least 2 litres (about 0.5 gal) of drinking water per person per day. We plan on 4 litres (1 gallon) to also cover cooking and washing. Adjust for babies, older adults, pets, heat or illness.

General information only

This kit is general information, not medical, legal or electrical advice. Follow instructions from your local authorities and utility. Sources are linked on prepforoutage.com.

SECTION

01 Water

Store | Treat | Ration

WHAT TO HAVE

- [ ] Drinking and cooking water for at least 3 days, planning on 4 L (1 gal) per person per day
- [ ] Extra for pets: about half a person's share per cat or dog
- [ ] Food-grade containers with lids, filled and labelled with the date
- [ ] A water filter or purification tablets as a backup (not a replacement for stored water)
- [ ] Unscented household bleach and an eyedropper (check the label for water treatment instructions)

WATER PLANNER

People + pets (pets count as half)	Days	Litres per day	Total litres
_____	3	4 L (1 gal)	_____
_____	7	4 L (1 gal)	_____

! Know the limits of filters

Most portable filters do not remove chemicals, heavy metals or salt. If flood water or a chemical spill is possible, use stored or bottled water. Follow any boil-water advisory from your public health authority. Boiling kills germs, not chemicals.

i If taps still run

Fill the bathtub and spare containers before a storm. Water for flushing can come from the tub. Do not drink it unless it has been treated.

SECTION

02 Food

Pantry first | No cooking

WHAT TO HAVE

- [ ] 3 days of food you already eat that needs no cooking or only hot water
- [ ] Manual can opener
- [ ] Baby formula, pet food and any special-diet items
- [ ] Peanut butter, crackers, canned beans or tuna, fruit, nuts, granola bars
- [ ] Paper plates, utensils and hand sanitizer to save washing water
- [ ] A fridge and freezer thermometer

FRIDGE AND FREEZER RULES

Where	Stays cold (door closed)
Refrigerator	About 4 hours
Full freezer	About 48 hours
Half-full freezer	About 24 hours

Keep or toss

Throw out perishable food (meat, poultry, fish, dairy, eggs, cooked leftovers, cut fruit) that has been above 4 °C (40 °F) for 2 hours or more. Do not taste food to test it. When in doubt, throw it out.

Cooking

Cook with fuel only outdoors, in open air, away from the house. Never use a barbecue, camp stove or charcoal inside a home, garage or tent.

SECTION

03 Power and light

Light | Information | Backup power

WHAT TO HAVE

- [ ] A headlamp or flashlight for each person, with spare batteries (skip candles)
- [ ] Battery or hand-crank AM/FM radio (US: with the NOAA weather band)
- [ ] Charged power banks and charging cables for every phone
- [ ] A lantern for the main room
- [ ] A backup power station, if essentials need power (see sizing below)
- [ ] Written list of the devices you must keep running and their watts

QUICK SIZING FOR BACKUP POWER

Watts x hours = watt-hours. Divide by 0.85 for conversion losses. Example: a 15 W router for 12 hours is 180 Wh.

Device (typical, check your label)	Watts	Hours per day	Watt-hours
Router and modem	10 to 25	24	240 to 600
Phone charging	5 to 20	3	15 to 60
LED light	5 to 10	5	25 to 50
Laptop	40 to 65	6	240 to 390
Fridge (modern)	40 to 100 avg	24	1,000 to 2,000

Power stations are not heaters

A 1,500 W heater empties a 1,000 Wh battery in well under an hour. Use backup power for communication, light, a medical device and part of a fridge's day. Test it before you need it.

SECTION

04 Warmth and safety

Heat one room | CO safety

WHAT TO HAVE

- [ ] Warm blankets or sleeping bags rated for the cold you expect
- [ ] Hats, gloves and wool socks for everyone
- [ ] A plan to heat one small room: close doors, hang blankets over windows
- [ ] Battery-backed carbon monoxide alarm, tested this month
- [ ] Fire extinguisher and smoke alarms with fresh batteries
- [ ] Know where the nearest warming centre is

The one rule: carbon monoxide

Never run a generator, barbecue, camp stove, charcoal grill, gas oven or vehicle inside a home, garage, shed or tent, even with a door open. Carbon monoxide has no smell and can kill. Generators run outdoors, well away from windows, doors and vents.

SIGNS OF CARBON MONOXIDE POISONING

Headache, dizziness, nausea, weakness, confusion or drowsiness, often affecting several people at once. Get outside into fresh air and call 911.

If indoor temperatures approach freezing

Go to a warming centre or a friend's home. Check on older neighbours and anyone who lives alone.

SECTION

05 Health and documents

Medications | Devices | Papers

WHAT TO HAVE

- [ ] First aid kit, checked this year
- [ ] Prescription medications for at least a week, with a written list of names and doses
- [ ] A backup plan for any powered medical device (CPAP, oxygen, powered bed)
- [ ] Glasses, hearing-aid batteries, mobility aids
- [ ] Copies of ID, insurance and key papers in a waterproof bag
- [ ] Cash in small bills
- [ ] Spare house and car keys

Powered medical equipment

Talk to your clinician and equipment supplier about a backup plan before an outage. Ask your power utility whether it keeps a register of customers who rely on powered medical equipment. Call emergency services if you cannot safely operate essential equipment. This kit is not medical advice.

SECTION 06

Pets

Water | Food | Go-kit

WHAT TO HAVE

- [ ] Water for each pet: about 1 oz per lb of body weight per day (60 mL per kg), more in heat
- [ ] 3 to 7 days of your pet's normal food in a sealed container, plus a manual can opener if it eats canned food
- [ ] A week of any medication, with a copy of the prescription and vet records
- [ ] Carrier or crate for each pet, collar with ID tag, leash or harness, and a recent photo of you with your pet
- [ ] Bowls, litter and tray, waste bags, a blanket or a familiar toy
- [ ] Vet phone number, an after-hours clinic and a pet-friendly place to go

PET WATER BY WEIGHT

Pet weight	Water per day
5 kg (11 lb)	300 mL (10 oz)
10 kg (22 lb)	600 mL (20 oz)
25 kg (55 lb)	1.5 L (51 oz)
35 kg (77 lb)	2.1 L (71 oz)

! If you have to leave

Take pets with you. Many emergency shelters accept only service animals, so line up a pet-friendly hotel, boarding or a friend ahead of time. Keep pets in carriers or on leashes.

i Ask your vet

These amounts are a rule of thumb, so ask your vet about your pet. Bring pets inside in the cold, give shade and water in the heat, and never leave a pet in a parked car. Birds, reptiles and fish may need heat or air that stops with the power.

SECTION

07 Plan and contacts

Contacts | Shut-offs | Alerts

EMERGENCY CONTACTS

Name	Phone	Notes

KEY LOCATIONS

Main breaker:	_____
Water shut-off:	_____
Gas shut-off:	_____
Nearest warming centre:	_____
Utility outage phone:	_____
Utility outage map:	_____

WHERE TO CHECK

Live outage maps: prepforoutage.com/outage-map.html

Official guidance: Government of Canada: getprepared.gc.ca (search power outages) | Weather alerts: weather.gc.ca

If the power goes out: check your breaker, check the utility map, report the outage, keep fridge doors closed, and check on neighbours.

Go deeper

Dozens of guides, an outage planner and a readiness quiz are free at prepforoutage.com (in English). We may earn a commission on products linked on our site at no cost to you (prepforoutage.com/affiliate-disclosure.html).