

What to do if your power goes out

Summer thunderstorms can lead to unexpected outages. Here are some important tips to help you and your family during an outage:

- Keep refrigerator and freezer doors closed. An unopened refrigerator will keep foods cold for about 4 hours. A full freezer will keep the temperature for about 48 hours if the door remains closed.
- If it looks like the power outage will continue beyond a day, prepare a cooler with ice for your freezer items.
- Check fuses or circuit breakers to rule out problems with electricity inside your home. If a fuse is blown, replace it with the appropriate fuse. If a breaker has tripped, reset it from off to on. If you are unsure about fixing a fuse or circuit breaker, call an electrician.
- Check the media and social media. If the outage is widespread, you can usually monitor the outage restoration process by checking your local media outlets. You can also get up-to-date outage information from our online outage map at northwesternenergy.com/outage.
- Turn off all but one light, so you will notice when we have restored your electricity.
- Unplug computers, chargers, TVs, gaming consoles and other sensitive appliances to avoid possible damage when electricity is restored.
- When power resumes, reset clocks and check automatic alarms and timers. Plug in only essential items. Wait 10 minutes before connecting the remainder of your items to let the electrical system stabilize.
- Use a flashlight. Avoid candles because of the fire risk.
- Don't wire an emergency generator into your home. Back-feed from generators into power lines could injure or kill a lineman working to get electricity restored to your area. If you use a generator to power up a specific appliance, plug the appliance directly into the generator and make sure the generator is located outside so poisonous carbon monoxide fumes don't enter your home.

For more information about safety during outages, please visit northwesternenergy.com/safety/outagesafety



Stay away from downed power lines

If you see a downed or damaged power line, keep your distance and call us immediately. Never touch a power line or any object, including trees, that are in contact with a line. Remember:

- Keep people, equipment and objects at least 10 feet away from power lines.
- Never attempt to remove a fallen tree or branch from a power line. You could be seriously injured or killed.
- If a tree or branch does come in contact with a power line, keep yourself and others away from the tree and contact your utility company.

How to recognize and report natural gas safety concerns

Know how to detect a natural gas leak.

- Smell: Natural gas is odorless, so we add an odorant called mercaptan. It smells like rotten eggs or sulfur.
- Listen: A natural gas leak may make a hissing sound or even a roar.
- Look: A leak can send dust or debris flying. It will also produce bubbles under water and can lead to discolored vegetation.

If you detect a natural gas leak, leave the area immediately. Don't do anything that may cause a spark.

Once you are in a safe area, call the NorthWestern Energy emergency number to report a gas leak.



DIY project? Call 811

We've seen a sharp incline in pipeline and underground utility strikes this spring and summer. Even in this time of social distancing, calling 811 or visiting call811.com before you dig is essential. Remember:

- No project is too small. If it requires a shovel, call first.
- 811 is free.
- Even on your property and in your yard, damages can be expensive and even deadly.
- Call at least two full business days in advance.
- Markings are valid for 30 days. If your project is delayed or lasts longer, call again.