

# Power Outage Tips

## For Seniors and People with Disabilities

Here are some tips and ideas that may help you during and after a power outage:

- Speak with your neighbors about setting up a check-in system. Decide how you will communicate with each other (by phone, knock on doors, etc.).
- Arrange to stay with a family member or friend in a non-affected area.
- Keep your prescription medications and durable medical equipment in a convenient location. Be sure glasses, hearing aids, and other assistive devices are within easy reach.
- Have information about your medical conditions, medications, emergency contacts, and insurance provider nearby.
- Wear medical alert tags or bracelets at all times. If you have a communication disability, make sure your emergency information notes the best way to communicate with you. Have a pen and notepad or paper handy.
- Keep hands free by using a cross-body bag to hold your phone, medications, flashlight, whistle and frequently used items.
- Keep your refrigerator and freezer doors closed as much as possible. An unopened refrigerator will keep foods cold for about four hours. If in doubt about the safety of any food, throw it out.
- Eat canned and non-perishable foods, and keep a manual can opener on hand. Meal/snack ideas that don't require cooking:
  - Peanut butter and jelly sandwiches
  - Salad
  - Prepared tuna salad kits, readily available in most grocery stores
  - Canned fruit or vegetables
- Use your local community/senior center to share a meal with others. At home, consider combining food and resources such as camping stoves, gas grills, or water filters to benefit your immediate community. You may not have to go far to connect with others or get help.
- Food Bank of Contra Costa & Solano and local food pantries are available for people in need.
- Unlock electric security gates and garage doors to ensure you can get in and out.
- Disconnect appliances and electronics to avoid damage from electrical surges.
- Keep a flashlight or battery-operated lantern within easy reach. Do not use candles for heat or light, as they can be a fire hazard.
- Use portable generators cautiously. Operate outdoors only in a well-ventilated area. Refuel generator only after it has cooled. Do not connect a generator to your home's electrical system.
- Dial 211 for information and resources during the outage. Dial 911 for emergencies only.

Partial listing collected from various sources, including:

California Department of Aging [www.aging.ca.gov](http://www.aging.ca.gov)  
Centers for Disease Control and Prevention [www.cdc.gov](http://www.cdc.gov)  
National Oceanic & Atmospheric Administration [www.noaa.gov](http://www.noaa.gov)  
Federal Emergency Management Agency [www.fema.gov](http://www.fema.gov)  
American Red Cross [www.redcross.org](http://www.redcross.org)  
Department of Homeland Security [www.ready.gov](http://www.ready.gov)  
AARP [www.aarp.org](http://www.aarp.org)