

## SMOKE AND CARBON MONOXIDE ALARMS

These alarms are essential for your family's safety. Smoke and carbon monoxide alarms electrically connected to your home's power supply will not work when the electricity is off, unless they have battery back-ups. Test your smoke alarms to find out if they work.

Make sure your home has a battery-operated smoke alarm on every level and a battery-operated carbon monoxide alarm. You are responsible for notifying your landlord that the dwelling is without electricity.

## HOME ESCAPE PLANNING AND EMERGENCY COMMUNICATION

Inform everyone in your home about the fire safety rules they must follow. Conduct regular safety checks of each room and keep a watchful eye on children and older adults. Make sure everyone knows they must leave the building immediately in event of fire. Practice your escape plan. Have at least one telephone (not cordless) that works during a power failure.

## HEATING AND COOKING

Make sure electric stove elements, ovens, kettles, frying pans, clothes irons, hair-dryers, etc., are OFF or unplugged to prevent fires from starting when the electricity is restored.

Think carefully before you bring a fuel-burning appliance into your home. Any device that burns fuel requires oxygen to burn properly and ventilation to remove the deadly products of combustion. Carbon monoxide is produced by any device fueled by natural gas, propane, heating oil, kerosene, coal, charcoal, gasoline or wood. It is a colourless, odourless and tasteless gas that can be deadly.

## PORTABLE SPACE HEATERS

- Use only portable space heaters that have been designed for indoor and where applicable residential use
- Before using one, review the manufacturer's recommendations for usage and follow the instructions. Only use the fuel for which the appliance is designed
- Provide adequate ventilation by opening a window slightly, when the heater is in use.
- Before refueling, turn off the heater, wait for it to cool and take the heater outside to refill
- Keep all heaters at least 1 m (3 feet) away from combustibles including drapes, carpeting and furniture

**PROPANE & CHARCOAL BARBEQUES**  
Should ONLY be used outside. Do not bring them inside the building.

- Turn portable space heaters off when you are not in the room and before going to sleep

## WOODSTOVES AND FIREPLACES

- If you have not used the fireplace or woodstove for a long time, have it checked by a professional technician before using it. The chimney may be blocked or damaged, which could cause a fire or a build-up of carbon monoxide inside the building.
- Always empty ashes into a covered metal container and store them outside, away from combustibles.
- Propane and charcoal barbeques should be used outside only. Do not bring them inside the building.

## LOSS OF HEAT

When a building's heating system is inoperative, water supplies, sanitary systems, fire sprinklers, standpipe hose systems and portable fire extinguishers, amongst other things, may freeze. Freezing can make this equipment inoperative and cause damage. Precautions must be taken to prevent this from happening.

## FIRE AND LIFE SAFETY SYSTEMS

Without electricity, fire and life safety systems may not operate as originally designed. The fire alarm system, voice communication system, and other fire and life safety features rely on electricity to operate appropriately. Some fire and life safety systems are equipped with a secondary source of power consisting of batteries. When the power is depleted in these batteries the system or equipment will no longer work. The Ontario Fire code, O. Reg. 388/97 as amended, stipulates that such systems must be maintained in operating condition at all times.

Should the power not be properly restored or where an alternative electrical power supply is not provided, occupant safety and property are at risk from fire.

## ALTERNATIVE MEASURES

Review the buildings approved "Fire Safety Plan". Occupants must know the fire and life safety practices to follow. The local Chief Fire Official must be contacted where applicable to determine approved alternative measures. These measures are to be implemented for the life safety of building occupants when fire and life safety systems are inoperative or impaired.



Make sure you and your family are safe by being prepared for unexpected power outages.

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Follow these guidelines to assure your property is safe from fire and other hazards.



# POWER OUTAGES

# BE PREPARED

# PROPERTY SAFETY

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Although Algoma Power strives to provide safe and reliable power to its customers, disasters can occur. Recently we have been made aware of extensive power outages that affected thousands of households and businesses in Ontario. It is important to consider what may be required during an emergency that could affect you for an extended period of time. The following information is intended to aid you in readying for outages at any time of the year and especially during the colder winter months. It contains several points, yet it is not comprehensive to everyone's individual requirements.

### BEFORE AN OUTAGE

The easiest way to create your emergency plan is to role play. Pretend the emergency is happening and discuss what actions you should take within your household or business. It is also important to examine your plan after any emergency to improve it. Disaster plans are only effective if known, used, and revised.

## CAUTION

**While the electricity is off, take care when using alternative lighting, cooking and heating equipment. Review the following information and take precautions to make sure everyone stays safe.**

- Make sure you have working flashlights and battery-powered portable radios with an extra supply of batteries (check the "good through" dates) and have them easily accessible. Crank styles work well.
- Make sure to have one telephone that does not need electricity to operate (not plugged into a power source).
- Develop a disaster supply kit with enough essential supplies to last several days. The kit should include water; dried, canned, or other non-perishable food; and other emergency supplies such as first-aid supplies and prescription medicines. A good rule of thumb for water is 5 litres per day per person. When developing your kit, use battery powered lanterns rather than candles or open flame devices (to minimize the risk of fire).
- Have sufficient heating fuel, as regular sources may be cut off. Have emergency heating equipment and fuel (a gas fireplace, wood burning stove or fireplace) so you

can keep at least one room livable. Be sure the room is well ventilated.

- Make sure your home is properly insulated. Caulk and weather-strip doors and windows to keep cold air out. Install storm windows or cover windows with plastic from the inside to provide insulation.
- Let faucets drip a little to avoid freezing in colder months.
- Know how to shut off water valves and drain pipes (in case of a long term outage in freezing conditions).
- Your water supply could be affected (a well-water pump system). When you are aware of an outage, fill your bathtub and spare containers with water. Water in the bathtub should be used for sanitation purposes only, not as drinking water. Pouring a pail of water from the tub directly into the bowl can flush a toilet.
- Do not open the refrigerator or freezer door. Food can stay cold in a full refrigerator for up to 24 hours, and in a well-packed freezer for 48 hours (24 hours if it is half-packed – **TIP:** Fill plastic containers 90% full of water and freeze in your freezer to well-pack your freezer).
- If you have medication that requires refrigeration, check with your pharmacist for guidance on proper storage during an extended outage.
- Review the process for manually operating an electric garage door.
- If you normally access your home via your garage with an electric garage door opener, ensure you have a key to access your home or business.

### DURING AN OUTAGE

- In winter months congregate everyone in one room – it is easier to warm one room rather than a whole house. Use towels or rugs at doors and windows to minimize drafts.
- If using candles, ensure they cannot tip over and are away from flammable items.
- Dress for the season, wearing several layers of loose fitting, light-weight clothing, rather than a single layer of heavy clothing. The outer garments should be tightly woven and water repellent. Mittens are better than gloves. Wear a hat. Watch for signs of frostbite: loss of feeling and white or pale appearance in the extremities such as fingers, toes, ear lobes or the tip of the nose. Watch for signs of hypothermia: uncontrollable shivering, memory loss, disorientation, incoherence, slurred speech, drowsiness and apparent exhaustion. If symptoms are

### IMPORTANT CONSIDERATION:

**Are there critical functions at your service that require backup power? Perhaps you need backup power because of remote locations, health issues, or livestock needs. As you explore installation of a backup generator, get professional help in evaluating your needs.**

- **Portable generators should be used outdoors only. They should be carefully placed outside to ensure that fumes do not enter the building.**
- **Generators and hot gases should be kept away from combustibles.**
- **Store fuel for the generator outside in an approved container a safe distance away from the building and generator.**
- **Refuel only after shutting it down and letting it cool. Follow manufacturer's recommendations regarding use.**
- **Hire a licensed electrical contractor or electrician to install the unit. Have the installation inspected by the Electrical Safety Authority.**

**You should never try to power the house wiring by plugging the generator into a wall outlet, a practice known as "back feeding."**

- detected, get the victim to a warm location, remove any wet clothing, warm the centre of the body first and give warm, non-alcoholic beverages, if the victim is conscious. Get medical help, as soon as possible.
- Snowdrifts can be used as a makeshift freezer for food. (Be aware of attracting animals).
  - Snow can be melted for an additional water source.
  - In order to protect against possible voltage irregularities that can occur when power is restored, you should unplug all sensitive electronic equipment, including TVs, stereo, VCR, microwave oven, computer, cordless telephone, answering machine and garage door opener.
  - Keep your car half full of gasoline since gas stations cannot pump gas without electricity.
  - Keep a sum of cash available – debit/credit cards do not work without electricity.
  - Keep one light switched to "on" so you will know when power is restored.

- Eat perishable foods first to minimize losses.
- If using a propane BBQ or generator, do not bring it indoors or in a closed-up garage. Proper ventilation is required for your safety.

### AFTER AN OUTAGE

- Be extra cautious if you go outside to inspect for damage after a storm. Downed or hanging electrical wires can be hidden by snowdrifts, trees or debris, and could be live. Never attempt to touch or moved downed lines. Keep children and pets away from them.
- Check with/help neighbours.
- Do not touch anything power lines are touching, such as tree branches or fences.
- Always assume a downed line is a live line. Call your utility company to report any outage-related problem.
- Evaluate your essential requirements during the outage and restock your emergency supplies accordingly.

### ALTERNATIVE LIGHTING

**Use flashlights or chemical light sticks instead of candles or lanterns to reduce fire risks.**

#### Matches and Lighters

- **Keep all matches and lighters out of sight and reach of children, preferably locked away.**

#### Candles

- **Place in candleholders, protected by a glass chimney.**
- **Keep candles away from all combustible materials, such as draperies, paper, etc.**
- **Place them out of reach of children and pets.**
- **Avoid walking with a lit candle or taking it into a closet or similar area to look for things.**
- **Extinguish candles when you leave the room or go to sleep, never leave them unattended.**

#### Lanterns and Oil Lamps

- **Place lamps and lanterns in a secure place where they cannot be knocked over by children or pets.**
- **Keep away from combustibles and wind areas.**
- **Refill lamps and lanterns outdoors away from combustible and other people.**
- **Before going to sleep, make sure all lamps are out.**