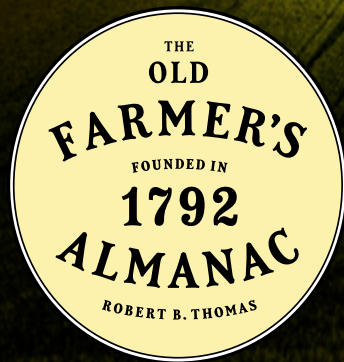
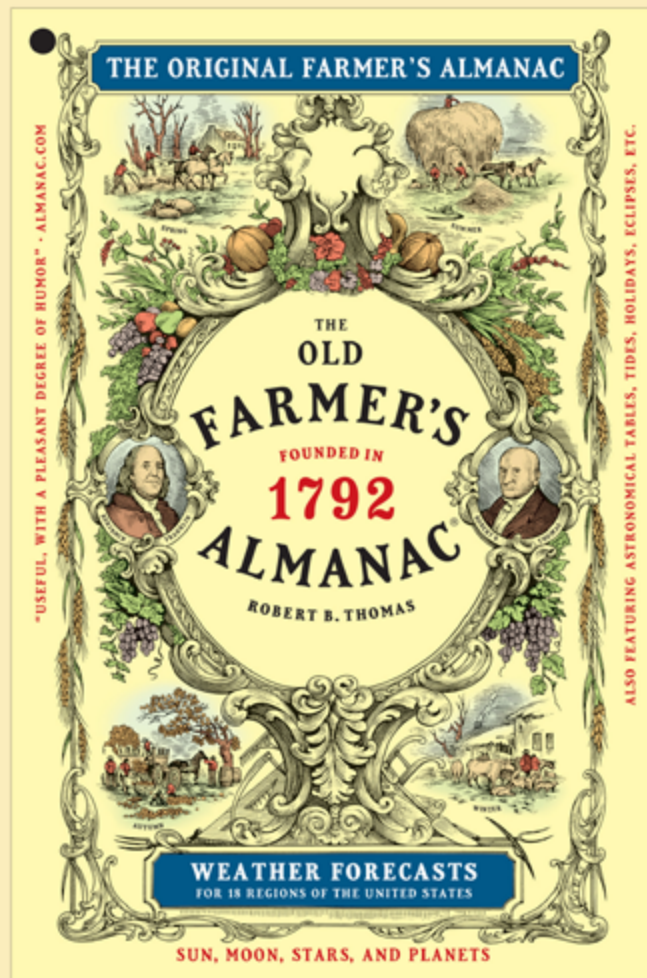


WHAT TO DO WHEN THE POWER GOES OUT

HOW TO PREPARE FOR AND SURVIVE
POWER OUTAGES, TORNADOS, AND
HURRICANES



THE ORIGINAL FARMER'S ALMANAC



The Old Farmer's Almanac is North America's #1 Almanac

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WHAT TO DO WHEN THE POWER GOES OUT

Have you experienced a power outage? Are you ready for blackouts? Read this short guide to find out—and get prepared.

WHAT CAUSES POWER OUTAGES?

Power outages can be caused by a variety of natural disasters, including blizzards, floods, tornadoes, and hurricanes. Fires and auto accidents can necessitate or cause an outage. Aging infrastructure is also frequently to blame.

Believe it or not, even a squirrel that gnaws its way into a substation, an errant goose that flies into a power line, or thousands of tent caterpillars that swarm a transformer can turn off every power-dependent device in your home.

If you think that a power outage can't happen to you, think again: According to *International Business Times*, power outages have increased by nearly 300% since the 1980s.

WHAT FAILS DURING A POWER OUTAGE?

During a power outage, you typically experience loss of lights, refrigeration (putting food and medications at risk), home heat and/or air conditioning, medical equipment (potentially putting loved ones at risk), communication devices and television, and more.

When the power goes out, chaos can ensue. In fact, virtually every electrical tool and device becomes useless. Your first thought will be the safety and well-being of your family, and if you are not a household with a home generator, you will have to figure out how to survive without electricity.

BENEFITS OF A HOME GENERATOR

Here in stormy New Hampshire, many of us—from all walks of life—have home generators. We've learned the hard way!

A generator automatically turns on during a blackout--and keeps the lights on, food and medicine from spoiling, the heat or A/C running, and medical devices operating. It keeps you from going outside where you'll risk dangerous downed power lines and falling trees.

If you're interested in a generator, the first step is simply to figure out your power use and power needs.



MAKE AN EMERGENCY SUPPLY KIT

If your area is prone to power outages, an emergency survival kit is the minimal defense against a power outage. It's only responsible to have some supplies on hand. The Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) recommends the following:

Food and Water Supplies

- a 3-day supply of water, consisting of 1 gallon of water for each person, per day. To ensure that this is a safe supply, buy commercially bottled water.
- a 3-day supply of nonperishable food, including ready-to-eat canned goods. Choose high-energy foods such as granola, dried fruit, nuts, protein bars, and jerky. Avoid foods that will make you thirsty, such as chips or pretzels.
- food necessary to satisfy any special dietary needs of your family
- a manual can opener
- eating utensils

Review your food supplies occasionally and eliminate anything that has exceeded its "use by" date.

Health and Safety Supplies

- a first aid kit, including nonprescription medications and antibacterial gel. Be sure to stock extra prescription medication and any special medical or sanitary needs, such as diapers and formula for babies.
- tissues, paper towels, and toilet paper

Clothing Supplies

- at least one complete change of clothing for each family member
- plan accordingly for your climatic region. Layered clothing can help you stay warm and dry.

Essential Survival Tools for Emergencies

- flashlights, with extra batteries (or mechanical, squeeze-type flashlights)
- matches in a waterproof container
- paper and pencil
- signal flares
- extra cell phone batteries or battery packs
- a fire extinguisher
- a pocket knife
- duct tape
- cash

WHAT TO DO DURING A POWER OUTAGE

Here is a short list of ways to safely survive a blackout in your home.

How to Light Your Home

- Make your flashlights easy to find by attaching a strip of glow-in-the-dark tape to the body.
- When a flashlight is not in use, store the batteries in it upside down to conserve their power. When you need the flashlight, just remove and reinstall the batteries, making the proper + and – contact points.
- Invest in headlamps for each family member. These enable you to have both hands free to do tasks, and family members will be more independent.
- Buy candles and store them with a few secure holders, such as clean, empty food cans half-filled with sand.
- Consider getting kerosene lamps, lamp oil, and wicks. Practice lighting them in advance of a power outage.
- Have a supply of lighters or matches to light your candles and lamps with, too.



How to Stay Warm

- As soon as you lose power, drape all windows with blankets or whatever coverings you have. Uncover south-facing windows during the day to let in the Sun's warmth.
- Select one room in which people—and pets—can spend most of their time together. Close off (cover) the doorway to let the collective body heat accumulate.
- Make a list (in advance) of shelters and hotels that allow pets, in case you need to evacuate with your pets.

How to Cook Without Power

- If you have one, cook on your **woodstove**: Heat canned soup and boil water for tea and instant coffee.
- Cook on your outdoor grill—but only outdoors. Never use an outdoor grill indoors.
- Have potluck dinners with your neighbors and take turns hosting.
- Open your refrigerator or freezer door only when absolutely necessary. Before opening the door, visualize the contents to minimize the time the door is open.
- In cold climates, fill clean plastic milk jugs with water and put them outside to freeze solid. Put these jugs into coolers (temporary refrigerators) for food supplies.

If You Lose Your Water

- When a storm threatens, fill your bathtub with water (for **washing and flushing**).
- In cold climates, pack snow in buckets and bring indoors to melt.

How to Protect Your Home in a Power Outage

- Protect water pipes from freezing by wrapping them with layers of newspapers and then plastic wrap.
- To avoid damage from falling branches, **do not park your cars under trees**.
- Take your houseplants to your workplace or a friend's house if possible.

It may seem obvious that the answer to many of the above issues is to have a standby generator!

TORNADO AND HURRICANE SAFETY TIPS

A power outage is often caused by extreme weather. If you've been watching the weather in the past year, you'll know that there extreme swings from low to high temperatures. In fact, there has been a "record of weather records."

Being prepared and equipped for these natural disasters is especially important for the safety of your home, family, and property. Be ready, know how to respond, stay safe, and survive.

How to Survive a Tornado

Did you know that the United States has the highest incidence of tornadoes in the world? Although tornadoes have occurred in all 50 states, Tornado Alley (covering all or parts of Arkansas, Iowa, Kansas, Louisiana, Minnesota, Nebraska, North Dakota, Ohio, Oklahoma, South Dakota, and Texas) experiences them most frequently.

Unlike hurricanes or other severe weather events, tornadoes are hard to predict until very near, but there are still clues:

- A pale green sky is an indicator that a tornado may occur. Although no one knows exactly why this is, some people theorize that because tornadoes usually form in the afternoon, the longer red and yellow wavelengths of afternoon sunlight turn water-heavy, bluish clouds to green.
- FEMA also advises to look out for the following danger signs: large hail; dark, low-lying clouds; and a loud roar, similar to that of a freight train.



What Tornado Warnings Mean

- A *tornado watch* indicates possible tornadoes in your area. Stay tuned to the radio or television news.
- A *tornado warning* means that a tornado is on the ground or has been detected by Doppler radar. Seek shelter immediately!

When a tornado hits . . .

- If you are indoors, take cover in the cellar or a small space (a closet or bathroom) in the interior of your home. If you can't decide where to go, choose the bathroom. Stay away from windows.
- If you are outdoors, find a field or ditch away from items that can fly through the air. Lie down as flat as you can.
- Do not stay in a car or try to drive away from a tornado. Cars can be flung about by high winds or crushed by debris.
- If you have evacuated your home, do not return until it is deemed safe to do so by local officials.

How to Survive a Hurricane

All U.S. Atlantic seaboard and Gulf coastal areas are subject to hurricanes or tropical storms. If you live in a susceptible area, be prepared. Here are official safety guidelines for hurricanes, plus tips on how to survive a hurricane.

What is a Hurricane?

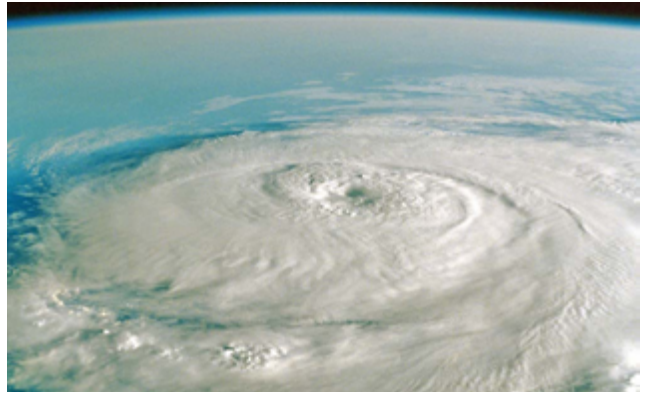
A hurricane is a type of tropical cyclone that can cause torrential rains, high winds, storm surges, and flooding. According to the National Hurricane Center, a hurricane is primarily defined by its wind speeds, which must be 74 mph or greater.

TORNADO AND HURRICANE SAFETY TIPS

FEMA Safety Guidelines for Hurricanes

Before a hurricane . . .

- Invest in permanent storm shutters for windows or 5/8-inch marine plywood, cut to fit and ready to install, to board up windows. (NOTE: Tape does not prevent windows from breaking.)
- Install straps or additional clips to securely fasten your roof to the frame structure to reduce roof damage.
- Trim trees and shrubs around your home to minimize the risk of debris.
- Clear loose and clogged rain gutters and downspouts to prevent misdirected flooding.
- Consider building a safe room.
- Determine how and where to secure your boat.
- Elevate articles in your basement to avoid damage from even minor flooding.
- Check your emergency generator supplies. Portable generators run on an ample supply of fresh fuel. Standby home generators are typically connected directly to the gas supply (propane or natural gas) and go through regular test cycles.



As a hurricane approaches . . .

- Stay informed by monitoring the storm via radio, TV, and Internet.
- Close storm shutters and secure outdoor objects (lawn furniture, trash barrels, hanging plants, toys, and even awnings) or bring them indoors. These can be broken and picked up by strong winds and potentially become dangerous projectiles.
- Turn off utilities if instructed by authorities to do so. Otherwise, turn the refrigerator thermostat to its coldest setting and keep its doors closed.
- Avoid using the phone, except for serious emergencies.
- Fully fuel your vehicles.
- Have cash available. If power is lost, ATMs may not be working.
- Moor your boat, if time permits.
- Fill the bathtub and other large containers with water for cleaning and flushing toilets.
- Follow the instructions of local authorities, including evacuating, if directed to do so.

Evacuate under the following conditions:

- If you are directed by local authorities to do so. Be sure to follow their instructions.
- If you live in a mobile home or temporary structure—such shelters are particularly hazardous during hurricanes—no matter how well fastened to the ground.
- If you live in a high-rise building—hurricane winds are stronger at higher elevations.
- If you live on the coast, on a floodplain, near a river, or on an inland waterway.
- If you feel that you are in danger.

If you are unable to evacuate, go to your safe room. If you do not have one, follow these guidelines:

- Stay indoors and away from windows and glass doors.
- Close all interior doors—secure and brace external doors.
- Keep curtains and blinds closed. Do not be fooled if there is a lull; it could be the eye of the storm—winds will pick up again.
- Take refuge in a small interior room, closet, or hallway on the lowest level.
- Lie on the floor under a table or another sturdy object.

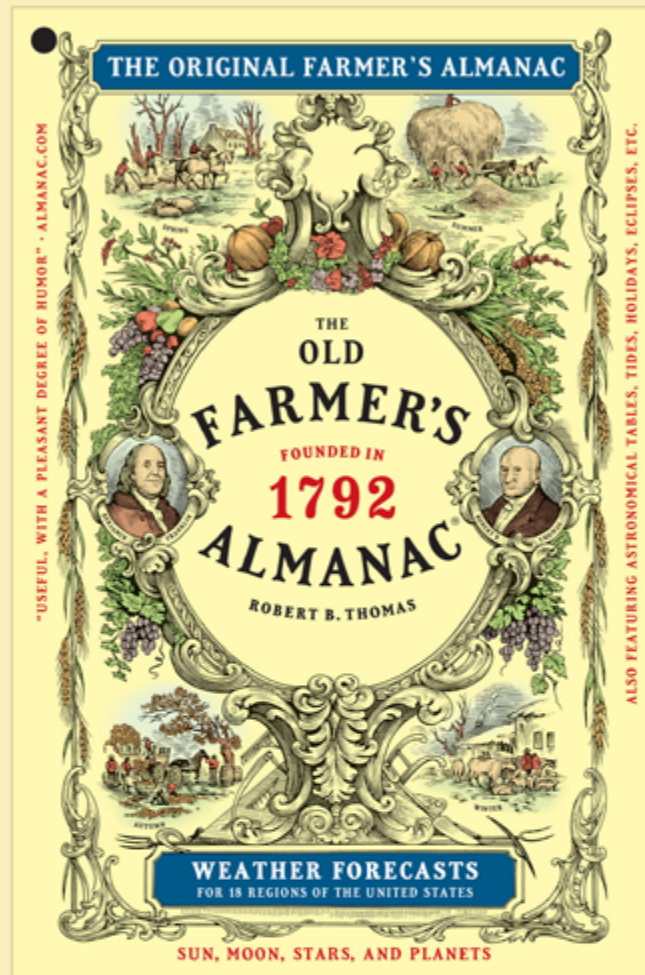
THE BOTTOM LINE

As the Boy Scout Motto goes, “Be Prepared” for power outages and extreme weather. Take out your calendar now and schedule an upcoming day to go through the lists provided here.

Seriously consider a standby generator. As stated above, the first step is figure out your power needs to you can have a generator that handles all you give it.

You’ll have peace of mind knowing that you’re prepared when the next serious emergency hits.

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