

Emergency Ready

Protect yourself and your loved ones during a power outage



We do our best to prevent them, but sometimes unexpected outages happen. That's why we want all our customers to be prepared in the event of an emergency.

This guide will help you make a plan, gather supplies and stay safe before, during and after an outage.

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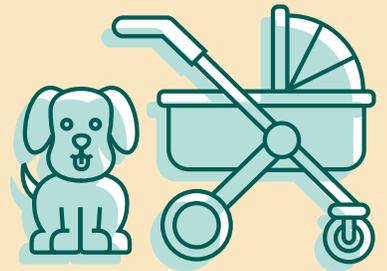
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Have young children, pets or others requiring special assistance at home?

This guide outlines the extra steps you'll need to take to help protect your loved ones.

Resources to know

Call 911 for police, fire or medical emergencies.

TORONTO HYDRO EMERGENCY HOTLINE

Report power outages or
downed lines to us 24/7.

416-542-8000 (press 1)

311 TORONTO

24/7 information on
non-emergency City
services, including
warming and cooling
centres, tree removal/
pruning and more.

Dial 3-1-1
toronto.ca/311
@311Toronto

PUBLIC SAFETY CANADA

Information and resources
about safety and
emergency preparedness.

getprepared.ca

ELECTRICAL SAFETY AUTHORITY

Information about electrical
safety and inspections.

1-877-372-7233
esasafe.com

EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT ONTARIO

Province-wide alerts,
updates and information
about emergency
situations or disasters.

ontario.ca/alert
@OntarioWarnings

ENVIRONMENT CANADA

Public weather alerts and
forecast information.

weather.gc.ca

CANADIAN RED CROSS

Assistance to communities
affected by emergencies.

1-800-418-1111
redcross.ca

ST. JOHN AMBULANCE

Emergency care through
first aid, medical
transportation and
evacuation services.

416-967-4244
sja.ca

CANADA MORTGAGE AND HOUSING CORPORATION

Information on
reoccupying your home
after a prolonged outage.

1-800-668-2642
cmhc-schl.gc.ca

INSURANCE BUREAU OF CANADA

Information on types of
insurance policies and
what's covered.

416-362-2031
ibc.ca

TELEHEALTH ONTARIO

Questions and concerns
about your health.

1-866-797-0000
**ontario.ca/page/
get-medical-advice-
telehealth-ontario**

Pre-storm preparation

It pays to be prepared — follow this list and make sure everyone in your household knows exactly what to do in the event of an emergency.



Be emergency-ready

1. Print this guide and keep it in a safe place.
2. Make or refresh your 72-hour emergency kit.
3. Update your emergency contact numbers.
4. Set a meeting place in case you have to evacuate.



Electrically powered medical equipment?

If anyone in your household depends on electrically powered medical equipment, such as a ventilator or a kidney dialysis machine, please register with us to be notified of planned power outages.

Call **416-542-8000** or complete the form at:
torontohydro.com/beprepared



Get alerts!

Sign up now to receive outage notifications and restoration notices by email and/or SMS (text).

Get started by registering or logging in to our self-serve portal at **torontohydro.com**.



When extreme weather is on the way

1. Know what equipment you have (such as hot water radiators) and how it can be protected.
2. Turn off and unplug unnecessary electrical equipment.
3. Charge your phone so you'll have a full battery in the event of an outage.
4. Refill any prescriptions.
5. Secure windows, doors, and outdoor furniture and equipment.
6. Fill your vehicle's gas tank and park your vehicle in a protected area, if possible.

Important contacts

Take time now to write down important details you may need in an emergency. Ensure every member of your household knows where to find this information.

EMERGENCY MEETING PLACE

Location:

EMERGENCY CONTACT

Name:

Address:

Phone:

FAMILY DOCTOR

Name:

Phone:

Prescriptions/doses/medical conditions/medical devices:

PHARMACY

Address:

Phone:

INSURANCE COMPANY

Name:

Phone:

Home policy number:

Vehicle policy number:



Three ways to stay in the know

1. Check status updates about outages in your area or use our outage live chat to report outages or get updates:

torontohydro.com/outagemap

Our outage live chat representatives are available Monday to Friday, 7 a.m. to 7 p.m.

2. Download the Toronto Hydro mobile app to report an outage and view our outage map:

torontohydro.com/onlinetools

3. Follow **@torontohydro** on Twitter for the latest updates.

Emergency kit checklist



Food and water

- Bottled water (4 litres per person per day)
- Non-perishable, ready-to-eat foods
- Manual can opener
- Disposable plates, glasses and utensils



First aid and medication

- First aid kit
- A one-week supply of critical medications and copies of all prescriptions
- Cooler bag and ice packs to help keep all medications cold



Basic tools and supplies

- Flashlights and fresh batteries
- Matches and lighters
- A wind-up or battery-operated radio
- Car chargers or power banks for charging electronic devices
- Basic tool kit that includes a utility knife, pliers, screwdriver, duct tape and a wrench
- Garbage bags and paper towels
- Needle and thread
- Paper and pen
- Fire extinguisher
- Signal flares and whistle
- Cash (ATMs may not work during an outage)



Sanitation

- Sturdy bucket that can be used as an emergency toilet
- Powdered chlorinated lime, household disinfectant and insecticide
- Household liquid bleach or water purification tablets
- Resealable plastic bags
- Hand sanitizer



For children and infants

- Formula and bottles
- Diapers and wipes
- Medication



For pets

- Food, water and bowls
- Leash, harness and muzzle
- ID tags and licences
- Medications and vaccination records
- Local animal shelter phone numbers

Before reporting an outage

Is the outage limited to your home?

If your neighbours have power, your main circuit breaker may have tripped. You'll know this has happened when the switch is halfway between the "off" and "on" position. Here's how you can safely reset it:

- 1 Unplug any appliance that you suspect may have caused the overload.

- 2 Using a flashlight, open your electrical panel.

- 3 Flip it firmly to "off," then back "on" again.

- 4 If the breaker trips again, don't reset it. This may indicate a more serious problem and you should contact a qualified electrician.

- 5 If your home still uses fuses instead of breakers, replace the blown fuse.



Is the whole neighbourhood affected?

If everyone on your street is without power, report your neighbourhood outage online at

**[torontohydro.com/
reportoutage](https://torontohydro.com/reportoutage)**

or by calling

416-542-8000.

Power outage do's and don'ts



What to do

- Secure windows, doors, and outdoor furniture and equipment
- Use a flashlight, rather than candles, whenever possible. If using candles, never leave them unattended
- Unplug appliances and electronics, and turn thermostats down to a minimum to protect them from power surges when power is restored
- Pack perishable foods like milk, dairy products, meats, fish, eggs and leftovers into a cooler with ice
- Discard any thawed food that has been at a temperature of 4°C or greater for more than two hours. When in doubt, throw it out
- Check on friends and neighbours, and offer help if they need it
- Limit cell phone use to conserve battery life and switch to battery-saving mode
- In the winter, keep a few taps slightly open to prevent pipes from freezing
- Keep generators outdoors, well away from windows and doors



What not to do

- Don't use BBQs, propane heaters or portable generators indoors or in enclosed spaces such as garages, covered porches and sheds. These appliances generate carbon monoxide gas, which can be fatal
- Don't use a gas stove as a source of heat
- Don't open your fridge or freezer more than necessary. A full freezer can keep food frozen for up to 48 hours as long as the door stays closed. An unopened refrigerator can keep food cold for about four hours
- Don't go near areas of standing water, such as a flooded basement or building
- Don't touch or go near downed powerlines. Stay back at least 10 metres (about the length of a school bus) and report immediately to us at **416-542-8000 (press 1)**

Safety during an outage



Generator safety

- Only use portable generators outdoors to avoid carbon monoxide poisoning
- Keep generators well away from open windows and doors
- Never connect a generator directly to your home's wiring. Plug appliances directly into the generator's outlet
- Use a heavy-duty outdoor extension cord
- Follow the manufacturer's instructions for grounding the generator
- If you feel dizzy, nauseous, drowsy or experience shortness of breath while using a generator, get to fresh air immediately and seek medical attention



Flood safety

- Don't enter a flooded basement unless you're sure the power is disconnected
- If the basement is flooded and your power is on, call us at **416-542-8000** to disconnect power
- Never unplug or disconnect an appliance if you have to stand in water to do it. This includes damp floors
- Don't use flooded appliances, outlets, switches or breaker panels until they have been checked and cleaned by a qualified electrician
- Keep cords and generators safely out of water



If you need to leave home

Here's how to protect your plumbing system if you need to leave your home. If in doubt, contact a licensed plumber.

1. Switch off your home's main breaker.
2. Turn off the water main where it enters the house. Protect the meter, valve and inlet pipe with blankets or insulation material.
3. Starting on the top floor of your home, open all taps and flush toilets to drain the water from your plumbing system.
4. Once drained, reopen the water main to allow for just a trickle of flow. Open only the cold tap on the lowest fixture (sink) or open the drain valve in the basement and close all taps.
5. Find out if you need to drain your hot water tank as not all tanks are the same. Some gas water heaters will work in a power outage. If you do need to drain your hot water tank, do so by running a hose from the drain valve to the drain.



After an outage

- If the hardware and cables running from the connection point down the side of your house and into your home are damaged, you must have an Electrical Safety Authority (ESA) approved electrician repair it before we can restore your service
- Report damaged trees or fallen branches that are on City-owned property to 311
- If the tree is on your property and near a powerline, hire a licensed arborist
- Check your basement for flooding. Don't go near standing water
- Gradually turn essential appliances back on. Wait 10 to 15 minutes before reconnecting electronics to give your electrical system a chance to stabilize
- Make sure your hot water heater is full before turning it on. Otherwise, it could cause damage to the heating elements
- Reset electric clocks, automatic timers and alarms
- Restock your emergency kit



Keeping cool (spring/summer outages)

- Wear loose-fitting clothes made of breathable fabrics like cotton and linen
- Drink plenty of water and cool drinks to stay hydrated, but try to avoid alcoholic or caffeinated drinks
- Close curtains and blinds during the day to help keep warm sunlight and heat out of your home (use blankets or dark sheets to cover windows if needed)
- Close doors to unused rooms — especially ones that get a lot of sunlight — and stuff a towel or blanket in cracks to stop cool air from escaping the rooms you do use
- If your home has multiple levels, try staying on the lowest one, as it's often the coolest
- If possible, avoid physically demanding tasks, as they may raise your body temperature
- Place a cold washrag or bandana around pulse points such as your wrists and neck to help keep your body cool
- Sleep in breathable linens like cotton (avoid materials with higher thread counts)
- “Reset” the cooling in your home by opening doors and windows, but only if the temperature outside drops (typically during the early morning or evenings)
- Consider using an outdoor cooking setup such as an outdoor grill to avoid heating up your home



Staying warm (fall/winter outages)

- Try to pick one room to stay in and place towels under doors and windows to create a seal and minimize heat loss
- Remember: heat rises. If your home has multiple levels, pick a room on a higher floor to stay in
- Open blinds and curtains during the day if it's sunny. Otherwise, keep them closed to insulate against cold air
- Wear multiple layers of loose-fitting clothing (don't forget your hands, feet and head) and use multiple blankets to help stay warm
- Doing some light exercise can improve blood circulation and help keep you warm. Avoid activities that make you sweat — the added moisture will make you colder
- Remember to eat and drink — food will provide energy that helps keep your body warm. Try to avoid consuming alcohol, as it may lower your core body temperature
- If you still have water, place bottles of hot water at the foot of your bed under your sheets to help create a “cave” of warmth
- Consider camping out indoors using a tent and sleeping bags, particularly through the night
- Avoid using candles for heating, as they can pose a fire hazard

Why your power may go out

We're upgrading and expanding Toronto's electricity grid to help improve service reliability and resiliency across our growing city. Despite our advance planning and preparation, power outages can occur from time to time. Here are some of the most common causes.

SEVERE WEATHER

- High winds, storms, ice and snow can bring down trees and branches onto powerlines and damage other electrical equipment
 - Rain and flooding can damage overhead and underground equipment
-

EQUIPMENT FAILURE

- Aging infrastructure can cause equipment to malfunction
 - Breakdowns can occur due to the complexity of electrical equipment
-

LOSS OF SUPPLY

Loss of supply occurs when Hydro One is experiencing issues with its power supply and is unable to provide us with electricity. When this happens, we're unable to deliver electricity to our customers until Hydro One makes repairs.

OTHER OUTAGE CAUSES

- Vehicle accidents can knock down hydro poles or bring down powerlines
- Squirrels and other animals can make contact with our equipment, causing damage
- Third-party construction crews may accidentally hit a buried line while excavating
- Untrimmed trees can come into contact with powerlines



Planned outages

Planned outages are occasionally scheduled to allow our crews to safely complete repair work, maintenance or upgrades on our equipment. When this is required, we do our best to notify customers in advance.

How we restore power

Sometimes an outage lasts only a few minutes, while other times it can go on for an extended period of time. Our crews work around the clock to restore power as quickly and safely as possible.

Once an outage has been reported, we follow these steps:

- 1 Crews are dispatched**

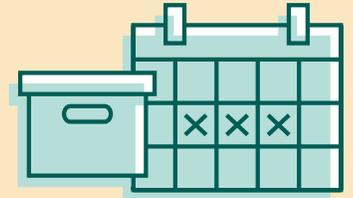
Crews travel to outage sites on the same roads the rest of us do. That means that heavy traffic can slow them down.
- 2 Damage is assessed**

It can take time to determine the exact location of the problem, especially if it involves underground equipment. Repairs can't be made until the cause is determined.
- 3 Repairs are completed**

While we do our best to provide restoration times, it's not always possible to do so.
- 4 Equipment is tested**

Crews make sure that the problem has been resolved and power can safely be restored.
- 5 Power is restored**

We restore power to all affected customers.



Did you know?

Only 12% of Ontarians have an emergency kit with enough supplies for three days — but with our unpredictable climate, it's essential to plan for the worst. Whether it's an ice storm, flash flood or tornado touchdown, it can take time for help to arrive after a crisis strikes. That's why everyone needs to be able to take care of themselves for at least 72 hours.

For more information, please visit
torontohydro.com/beprepared.



Connect with us

