The Lights Out Checklist

For a storm, a grid failure or a cyberattack. Stick it on the fridge and share it freely.

Ready Enough
Household readiness, minus the fear

If it's a cyberattack, expect more to be down at once: card readers, ATMs, gas pumps, internet and maybe cell service. Keep some cash in small bills, paper copies of key phone numbers and prescriptions, and the car above half a tank. Text instead of calling, and get news from a battery radio. A long outage looks the same at your house whatever caused it.

BEFORE IT HITS

- [ ] **Charge everything:** phones, power banks, laptops, a power station if you have one.
- [ ] **Keep the car above half a tank** and some cash in small bills.
- [ ] **Water:** 1 gallon per person per day. Aim for at least 3 days.
- [ ] **Food you can eat without cooking,** plus a manual can opener.
- [ ] **Flashlights and fresh batteries** for every person. No candles.
- [ ] **Test your carbon monoxide alarms.** One on every level, and outside bedrooms.
- [ ] **Drip faucets on outside walls** on the coldest nights, and open the cabinets under sinks.
- [ ] **Find your main water shutoff** now, before a pipe bursts.
- [ ] **A battery or hand-crank radio,** so you can get news without a phone or internet.
- [ ] **Refills:** make sure no one is down to their last few days of medicine.

WHEN THE POWER GOES OUT

- [ ] **Report it** to your power company (save its outage number or text code in your phone now). Don't call 911 to ask when power returns.
- [ ] **Write down the time** the power went out.
- [ ] **Keep the fridge and freezer shut.** About 4 hours for the fridge, 48 for a full freezer (24 if half full).
- [ ] **Unplug what was running** and leave one light switched on so you know when power is back.
- [ ] **Pick one warm room,** close its doors, roll towels along the bottom, and keep everyone in it.
- [ ] **Layers, hats, wool socks.** Eat regular meals and drink water. Your body needs fuel to make heat.

NEVER

- ✕ Heat the house with a gas stove, oven, grill or clothes dryer.
- ✕ Run a generator in the garage, even with the door open. Outside only, 20+ feet from windows and doors.
- ✕ Run the car in the garage to charge phones or stay warm.
- ✕ Touch or drive over a downed line. Assume it's live.
- ✕ Use candles. Flashlights and lanterns only.

WHEN THE POWER COMES BACK

- [ ] **Fridge food above 40°F for more than 4 hours goes in the trash.** When in doubt, throw it out.
- [ ] **Freezer food with ice crystals** (or at 40°F or below) can be refrozen.
- [ ] **No water from a faucet?** A pipe may be frozen. Thaw with a hair dryer, never a flame.
- [ ] **No heat and nights below freezing for 48 hours?** Time to go somewhere warm.

Want the plan for your exact house?

The **Lights Out Playbook** is a printable guide built from your answers: your heat, your water, your kids and pets, your ZIP code. About 40 one-page how-to sheets, plus a shopping list with tested picks. **$39, by email in minutes.**

Scan the code or visit lightsoutplaybook.com

General information from CDC, FEMA, the National Weather Service, the Red Cross, USDA and the Consumer Product Safety Commission. Not professional advice. In an emergency, call 911.