

Major Storm Safety

Prevent fires, electrical shock and carbon monoxide poisoning when coping with a disaster.

Use flashlights and battery-operated candles if the power goes out

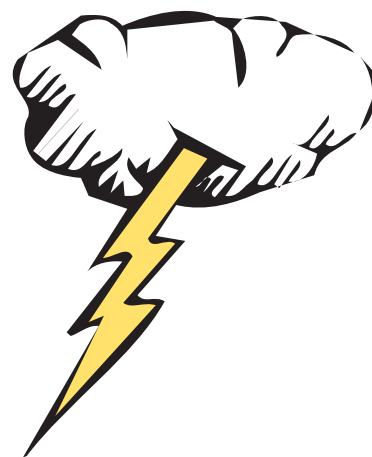
Use flashlights or battery-operated candles if the power goes out. Candle fires have more than doubled in the past decade and have turned deadly during power outages when smoke alarms also may not work.

Stock up on batteries and put new batteries in your smoke alarms

A working smoke alarm can double your chance of surviving a fire. Make sure your smoke alarms have fresh batteries. Change the batteries once a year. Install a battery operated or battery back-up smoke alarm if you only have hard-wired ones.

Carbon monoxide (CO) detectors protect your family from the *silent killer*

Carbon monoxide is colorless, odorless and can be fatal. Install CO detectors on each level of your home and within 10 feet of all bedroom doors.



Make and practice a home escape plan with two ways out and an outdoor meeting place

Teach your home's escape plan to your family and your guests. If you are visiting friends and relatives, ask about the escape plan and meeting place for their homes.

Use generators outdoors only

Generators and other fuel powered machines should only be used outdoors. Carbon monoxide fumes are odorless and can quickly overwhelm you indoors.

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FireFactors

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Use caution with alternative heating and cooking appliances.

During windy conditions, a sudden downdraft could blow a fire out of the fireplace and into a room. Always use a screen to contain sparks and embers.

Do not use a charcoal or propane grill indoors. This poses both carbon monoxide and explosion hazards.

Fire Extinguishers

Make sure your home fire extinguisher is handy and fully charged

Call for help

Keep cell phone batteries fully charged at all times. Be aware that fire alarm boxes may not work when the power is out. Do not be afraid to call for help in an emergency or if you think you may be in trouble. Avoid non-emergency calls to police and fire departments.

Gas safety

Report suspected gas leaks to the fire department immediately. Smell and listen for leaky gas connections. If you believe there is a gas leak (it smells like rotten eggs), go outdoors immediately and leave the doors to the building open. Do not turn electrical switches or appliances on or off. Never strike a match. Any flame can spark an explosion in the presence of gas.

Remember that water and electricity do not mix

Watch for downed wires. All downed wires should be considered "live". Explain this to children. Do not enter a flooded basement. If outlets or the fuse box in the basement is under water, it could electrically charge the water and electrocute you. Flooded water may also contain untreated sewage and cause serious health problems. If you fill the bathtub with water "just in case", be sure to keep all electrical appliances at a safe distance.

Keep vents clear

Keep outdoor furnace, hot water and dryer vents clear of drifting snow, leaves and debris to prevent flue gases from backing up into the home and creating a carbon monoxide hazard.