

How to Prepare for a Freeze & Potential Power Outage



Before a Freeze:

1. *Fill up* jugs of water and/or your bathtub. (For drinking and cooking)
2. *Charge* your phone, batteries, power banks and any other electronics. Gather battery powered light sources and candles and battery powered radio.
3. Have some *food on hand that you don't need to cook*, and actually want to eat.
4. Gather *warm clothing and blankets*. Hats, gloves, socks and shoes make a big difference when you're cold.
5. Fill your *gas tank*.
6. Try to find a friend or location that has *back up power* you can go to in an emergency, *especially if you use an electronic medical device*. Ask for help if you are worried!

WARNING:

In Texas, 10 times more people die of carbon monoxide poisoning than cold temperatures.

- Use any gas or propane powered device safely, only while you are awake, and with a carbon monoxide detector (generators, gas stove, car, propane grill, etc)
- Fire risk is high with any heat source. Make sure heaters are never next to flammable objects and turn off the heat source while you're not home.

Preparing Your Home for a Freeze:

- Protect your pipes:
 - a. Make sure you know where your *main water shutoff is* and have the tool to turn it off. Ask a neighbor if you don't have the tool.
 - i. If you suspect you have a leak, turn the water off at the main shut-off valve immediately.
 - b. *Open the cabinets* under the sinks in your kitchen and bathrooms to allow heated air to circulate around the water pipes.
 - c. *Protect faucets, outdoor pipes, and pipes* in unheated areas with pipe insulation.
 - i. In a pinch, wrap with rags, newspapers, trash bags, plastic foam or bubble wrap. Try to use non-absorbent materials outdoors.
 - ii. Drain hoses and put inside.
 - d. If there will be a freeze, the safest thing to do is (after filling jugs with water) turn off your water at the main meter and open all faucets. Even better is blow all the water out of your pipes.
 - i. If you drain your pipes, do not forget to *turn off the power to your electric water heater or turn off the gas supply line to your gas water heater*.

Preparing Your Home for a Freeze: continued...

- *Insulate your space* - Keep out cold air
 - a. *Tightly close doors and windows.* Stuff blankets or rags in any gaps or holes.
 - b. *Cover any vents* around your home's foundation and floor.
 - c. *Prepare a warm room* in case of a power outage
 - i. Try to choose a space that has less windows and external walls.
 - ii. Hang blankets or heavy curtains over windows and doorways, especially at night.
 - iii. Stock with lighting and heat items.

During a Freeze and Power Outage: *If you're too cold,*

- *Seek help if you are afraid.* Getting too cold isn't just uncomfortable, it can be dangerous. Once you're too cold it's really hard to warm back up. It's much better to intervene earlier.
- Take a drive in a car with the heat on. *Don't run your car in the garage.* Be sure to check road conditions before you drive.
- *Eat and drink, warm if possible.* Food provides the body with energy for producing its own heat.
- Put on warm clothing, insulating shoes, and a hat. Try lots of layers of loose-fitting, warm clothing. *Avoid sweating as that will chill you.*
- *Wear a mask* to keep your face warm and protect against Covid-19
- *Move around* and do jumping jacks.
- *Cuddle.*
- Take a *hot shower* if you have water and a gas water heater. Run hot water, close bathroom door and sit in steam.
- Put a *warm bottle* against your body.
- Many warm their homes using a gas oven or stove. ****If you do this please be aware of carbon monoxide dangers** and try to find a detector or use the stove intermittently or crack a window by the stove. If you are going to use your stove cook something

Supplies to Help to Stay Warm in Power Outage:

- Warm clothes, hats, gloves, and socks
- Propane and electric heater
- Generator
- Sleeping bags and blankets
- Emergency blankets
- Hand and foot warmers
- Propane camp stove to make hot drinks
- Portable battery
- Heating pad