

What to do during an unexpected interruption to your supply



Check to see if your neighbours have lost their supply and if the streetlights have gone out. If not, the problem could be with your electrical installation.

If you have a trip switch, check to see if it has operated. If it has, switch off all your appliances and try to reset the trip switch.

If you have checked your trip switch and your wiring and appliances are not faulty please ring us as soon as possible. Don't assume that we will know that your power has gone off. Please report your loss of supply using the emergency numbers below:

Central & Southern Scotland: **0845 27 27 999**

Cheshire, Merseyside & North Wales: **0845 27 22 424**

You may wish to keep a note of this number and keep it near to your telephone.

When you call we may require some information from you such as your name, postcode and house number. If we are aware of an interruption to supply and we have enough information for us to deal with the situation, we may activate our voice messaging system giving information about the interruption including the estimated time of restoration wherever possible. This message will be targeted to a specific geographic area and contain relevant information.

Pre-arranged interruptions

Sometimes we have to interrupt the electricity supply to carry out essential maintenance on our network. In these instances we aim to give you at least 2 days notice to help you prepare for the interruption.

We keep a Priority Services Register so that we are aware of our most vulnerable customers. Please click here for more details on how to register.

What should I do if Trip Switches.

How to check your trip switch and fuses

First check that you have a trip switch. This will be on or near the fuse box.

If you are not sure, have a look at the fuse box. The fuse box will be no further than three metres away from your electricity meter. If you have a trip switch, you will be able to see a 'push to test' button, bar, or a 'reset' button.

Not all properties have a trip switch.

If the trip switch is on

Turn the trip switch off and back on again. This is because the mechanism may trip inside the box but not trip the external switch. If the supply is not restored, push the 'test' button. If the switch trips, you have a problem with your wiring or an appliance. This is because the 'push to test' button can only trip the switch if your local network operator's supply is healthy. The trip will now be in the 'off' position.

If the trip switch is on and the 'push to test' button does not trip the switch, then there is no incoming supply.

If the trip switch is off

Try to switch it back on. If it stays on but the supply is still off, check you have not turned off the main switch on the fuse box. If the trip switch trips immediately you have a fault with your wiring, an appliance or the fuse box.

If you have a separate fuse box and trip switch, turn the fuse box off and turn the trip switch back on. The trip should then stay on.

If the trip switches to the 'off' position again then you have a fault with the fuse box or the trip switch itself. You should contact an approved electrician for any further internal work. To find more information on this please visit NICEIC. Remember to choose an electrical contractor approved by the National Inspection Council for Electrical Installation Contracting (NICEIC).

For more information about resetting a trip switch visit:

www.thecrownstate.co.uk/_ext/tenantshandbook/resettingatripswitch.htm

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Useful Hints For When There Is A Loss Of Power:

- Make sure you stay safe and comfortable, during cold weather dress warmly using several layers of clothing.
- Switch off and unplug any electrical appliances that get hot such as electric fires, heaters and cookers as you may forget they are on when the power is restored.
- Keep a battery power radio in your house, as you may be able to receive updates on the incident.
- Unplug sensitive equipment such as TVs, videos, faxes and computers.
- Ensure you have a torch with charged batteries. Leave it somewhere you can get to easily.
- If you must use candles don't leave them unattended, or stand them near anything flammable.
- Avoid opening your fridge or freezer if you can.
- Leaving a light switched on will tell you when the power is restored.
- If electricity is crucial to your health (for instance, if you use medical equipment at home) ask your electricity supplier to include you on their priority service register. Also ensure you have plans in place in the event of a long power cut. Make sure any medical equipment has battery back-up.
- If you have elderly neighbours please try to ensure they are safe, comfortable and wherever possible have some food or a warm drink.
- Many modern telephones won't work in a power cut so please try to keep at least one phone in your house that doesn't run of the mains supply. I.e. a traditional telephone.
- If you have a mains operated stair lift, check to see if there is a manual release handle that can be used to return the stair lift safely to ground level. Many stair lifts have battery back up. If yours does not, it may be possible to get one fitted.
- Remember street lights may also be off so take care if you have to go outside.
- If you are suffering from serious health problems please call the NHS Direct Helpline 0845 4647. In an emergency please contact your local hospital.
- For more detailed information on how to protect yourself and your property please [click here](#)

We want to make sure that all of our customers stay as comfortable as possible should their electricity supply be interrupted. The information contained in this section provides some helpful hints to help you prepare for an emergency situation.

Downed Power Lines

Treat all downed power lines as if they're live, or carrying electric current. Do not touch or try to move them. It's especially important to keep children and animals away. Report downed power lines immediately to SP EnergyNetworks and the emergency services.

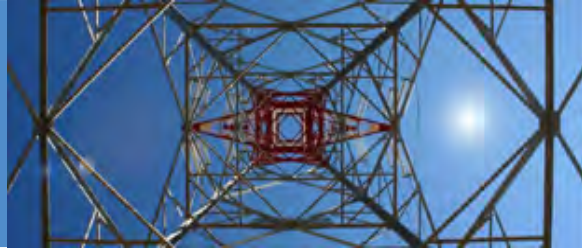
Vehicles

Keep your vehicle's fuel tank at least half-full because many service stations can't pump fuel during a power failure. Know how to use the manual option on electric garage doors and electric gates.

Radios And Flashlights

Every home should have battery-powered radios, flashlights and lanterns, as well as fresh batteries. You can buy battery-powered lights that plug into a power socket and come on automatically during an outage. If you must use candles, be careful and keep them away from flammable materials, drafts and children.

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Heating

If the power goes out during cold weather, your home will stay warm for a period of time, particularly if it's well insulated and free of drafts.

Many central heating systems and water heaters will not work during a power cut. If you have a fireplace, keep an ample supply of dry firewood in an accessible spot. Burn wood or logs made of newspapers.

DON'T burn charcoal indoors; it releases carbon monoxide, an odourless and sometimes deadly poison.

Portable heaters are a good alternative but please take care where you put them, make sure that any backup heat source meets all safety requirements and is approved for indoor use and never leave children alone with them.

Appliances

If your power goes off, unplug or turn off all electrical appliances, if it is safe to do so. Otherwise, when power is restored, several appliances may come back on at the same time and overload your circuits and may cause a fire hazard. Leave a single lamp on to alert you when power returns. Remember when conditions return to normal, turn your appliances back on one at a time. If brief outages occur for a few seconds, but power is fully restored after it, you don't need to turn off your appliances.

If the lights don't go off but continually flicker or dim, you have a low-voltage condition and should take the same precautions. When your supply is back on, you may need to reset electric timers, alarm clocks and so on.

Generators

Some customers prepare for the possibility of outages by installing a standby electric generator to keep lights and appliances or life-support devices running until we can restore service. If you have a generator, be sure that it's

installed safely. If it's not, you risk damaging your property and endangering the lives of Energy Networks employees who may be working on power lines some distance from your home.

Food

To prevent food from spoiling place ice blocks or bottled water in the freezer. During a power failure, transfer the bottles to your refrigerator. If your power goes out, don't keep checking inside your freezer or refrigerator. Every time you do, you let warm air in, which reduces the effectiveness.

Food in the freezer should keep for about twelve hours without power, however check the manufacturers instruction leaflet for details. Do not open the freezer doors unless you have to. Don't put fresh, unfrozen food into the freezer until after the power is restored. Covering the freezer with a blanket will help keep it cold.

Check the food when the power is back on to make sure it has not thawed. If it has, do not refreeze it. You may be able to claim on your household contents insurance for any lost food. Check your policy to make sure.

Commercial Freezers will only tolerate a short interruption of the electricity supply. If you have an open freezer it is advisable to empty it or make arrangements for an alternative electricity supply.