

Shepp Electric - Generator Systems Division

Area's ONLY **GENERAC POWER PRO** **PREMIER** Dealer for Installation, Warranty & Service
~ 30 Years Experience! ~ Over 5,000 SYSTEMS INSTALLED! ~ Family Owned & Operated ~

P O Box 293
Montville, Ohio 44064

Phone 440-968-3262
Fax 440-968-3272

Winter Power Outage Safety Tips for Ohioans – Compliments of Shepp Electric

Power outages can occur because of multiple reasons: utility blackouts or severe weather such as thunder and lightning storms, snow and ice storms, or strong winds. Whatever the reason, power outages can affect thousands – even millions – of people over an extended period of time.

In preparation for a power outage or any emergency, every household should have a disaster supply kit that contains key items such as non-perishable food, drinking water, a battery-operated radio or television, a land-line telephone or cell phone, and an emergency contact list of relatives or friends. To view checklists for home emergency preparedness kits visit: <http://weathersafety.ohio.gov/HomePreparednessKit.aspx>.

Extended power outages during extremely hot or extremely cold weather are serious concerns for individuals with special needs or for those who rely on life support devices requiring electricity, such as respirators or ventilators.

By law, utility companies are required to maintain and update their lists, annually, of customers who rely on life support devices. People with these medical concerns need to register with their utility company or complete an application to get on their lists. Written verification from the customer's physician may also need to be included. People with medical concerns should contact their utility companies for details.

However, there is no guarantee that customers with medical needs will have their power restored immediately. People who rely on medical equipment need to be extra prepared. Their emergency preparedness kit should include a list of places to go until power is restored, additional oxygen tanks, and if possible, a backup generator as an important aid for safety and security.

Before a Power Outage - To prepare for a blackout or power outage, you should do the following:

- To begin preparing, you should update or build an emergency kit (see above) and make a family communications plan <http://www.ready.gov/family-communications>.
- Follow energy conservation measures to keep the use of electricity as low as possible, which can help power companies avoid imposing rolling blackouts.
- Fill plastic containers with water and place them in the refrigerator and freezer, if there's room. Leave about an inch of space inside each one, because water expands as it freezes. This chilled or frozen water will help keep food cold during a temporary power outage.
- Be aware that most medication that requires refrigeration can be kept in a closed refrigerator for several hours without a problem. If unsure, check with your physician or pharmacist.
- Keep your gas tank in your vehicle at least half full because gas stations rely on electricity to power their pumps.
- Know where the manual release lever of your electric garage opener is located and know how to operate it. Garage doors can be heavy, so know that you may need help to lift it.
- Keep a key to your house with you if you regularly use the garage as the primary means of entering your home, in case the garage door will not open.

During a Power Outage

- Use only flashlights for emergency lighting. **NEVER** use candles during a blackout or power outage. Candles pose an extreme risk of fire.
- Keep refrigerator and freezer doors closed to keep your food as fresh as possible. Carefully check your food for signs of spoilage before eating.
- Turn off or disconnect appliances, equipment (like air conditioners) or electronics that were in use when the power went out. Power may return with momentary “surges” or “spikes” that can damage computers, as well as motors in appliances, like the air conditioner, refrigerator, washer or furnace.
- **NEVER** run a generator inside a home or garage.
- Do not connect a generator to a home’s electrical system. If you use a generator, connect the equipment you want to the outlets on the generator.
- Listen to a local radio station or to a battery or generator powered television for updated information.
- Use a standard telephone handset (land line) or cellular phone. Cordless phones and answering machines require electricity. Use the phone for emergencies only.
- **DURING THE SUMMER** – Take steps to remain cool, if it’s hot outside. During prolonged power outages, consider going to a place that has power and air conditioning, such as a movie theater, shopping mall, library or “cooling shelter” that may be open in your community.
- **DURING THE WINTER** – Put on layers of warm clothing if it’s cold outside. Never burn charcoal indoors for heating or cooking. Never use your gas oven as a source of heat. If the power is out for a prolonged period, plan to go to another location (a relative or friend’s home, or a public facility) that has heat to keep warm.
- Provide plenty of fresh cool water for your pets.
- Eliminate unnecessary travel, especially by car. Traffic signals will stop working during an outage, creating traffic congestion.
- Try to keep cash on hand. Equipment such as automated teller machines (ATMs) will not work during a power outage or blackout.

People with Disabilities and Other Access & Functional Needs

- Call your power company before rolling blackouts occur, if you use a battery-operated wheelchair, life-support system (such as oxygen) or other power-dependent equipment. Many utility companies keep a list and map of the locations of power-dependent customers, in case of an emergency.
- Ask utility companies what alternatives are available in your area. Contact the customer service department of your local utility company(ies) to learn if this service is available in your community.
- Have an extra battery, if you use a motorized wheelchair or scooter. A car battery also can be used with a wheelchair, but will not last as long as the wheelchair’s deep-cycle battery. If available, have a lightweight manual wheelchair for backup.
- If you are visually impaired, have a talking or Braille clock, or large-print timepiece with extra batteries.
- Consider getting a small, portable battery-operated television if you are deaf or have a hearing loss. Emergency broadcasts may give information in open captioning or American Sign Language (ASL).



GeneratorPros.com Serving all of Ohio and western PA.

1-877-423-9010

