



## Tropical Storm Isaac – Power Outage & Generator Safety

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In response to anticipated and real time power outages due to Tropical Storm Isaac, the Federal Alliance for Safe Homes (FLASH)<sup>®</sup> offers the following tips to keep families safe and comfortable.

### Family Safety/Comfort

- Include power outages in your family disaster plan, identifying alternate means of power generation including batteries, solar powered appliances, crank power radios, portable and permanent generators.
- Keep extra cash on hand since an extended power outage may prevent you from withdrawing money from automatic teller machines or banks.
- Keep your car fuel tank at least half-full, gas stations rely on electricity to power their pumps.
- Keep fresh batteries in flashlights. Do not use candles as they pose a fire hazard.
- During a power outage, resist the temptation to call 9-1-1 for information --that's what your battery-powered radio is for.
- Turn off all lights but one, to alert you when power resumes.
- Don't forget to turn off all cooking appliances to prevent fire. If power stops during meal preparation, you may not be home when power returns.
- Check on elderly neighbors, friends, or relatives who may need assistance if weather is severe during the outage.
- Take steps to remain cool. Move to the lowest level of your home as cool air falls and wear lightweight, light-colored clothing.
- Drink plenty of water, even if you do not feel thirsty. If the heat is intense and the power may be off for a long time, consider going to a movie theater, shopping mall or "cooling shelter" that may be opened in your community.
- Remember to provide plenty of fresh, cool water for your pets.

### Food

- Keep a supply of ice, non-perishable foods, medicine, baby supplies, and pet food as appropriate on hand. Also be sure to have at least one gallon of water per person per day on hand.
- Avoid opening the fridge or freezer. Food should be safe as long as the outage lasts no more than four hours.
- Have one or more coolers for cold food storage in case power outage is prolonged. Perishable foods should not be stored for more than two hours above 40 degrees Fahrenheit.
- If you eat food that was refrigerated or frozen, check it carefully for signs of spoilage.
- Keep portable grills well away from the home and in a well-ventilated area to avoid potential carbon monoxide poisoning.

### **Generators**

- Do not run a generator inside a home or garage. Use gas-powered generators only in well-ventilated areas.
- Connect only individual appliances to portable generators.
- Don't plug emergency generators into electric outlets or hook them directly to your home's electrical system - as they can feed electricity back into the power lines, putting you and line workers in danger.

### **When Power Returns**

- When power comes back on, it may come back with momentary, "surges" or "spikes" that can damage equipment such as computers and motors in appliances like the air conditioner, refrigerator, washer or furnace.
- When power is restored, wait a few minutes before turning on major appliances to help eliminate further problems caused by a sharp increase in demand.
- When power returns, recheck cooking and other heat generating appliances to ensure they are turned off and do not pose a fire threat.

For more information for staying safe during power outages, visit [www.flash.org](http://www.flash.org).