

## Week 1: Life without power

Blackouts can happen anytime, anywhere without a readily apparent cause or warning. Blackouts are one of the most important things to be prepared for. For those who can recall, the biggest blackout in history occurred just 7 years ago in August 2003, leaving about 50 million people without power. The following link provides helpful tips for preparing your home and family: <http://www.ready.gov/america/beinformed/blackout.html>

An important fact many of us neglect is that when the power goes out, that means utilities also go out. Aside from household utilities like heat and water, ATM's, gas stations, etc. will not be in service so remember to have extra cash at home and never drive your car "running on empty." It's best to keep the tank at least half full (but a quarter of a tank at minimum!). You might want to also set a regular schedule for backing up files and operating systems if you use a computer a lot.



**What to add to your emergency kit:** a battery-powered or hand-crank radio, extra flashlights and batteries, waterproof matches, thermal blankets, gloves, hats (in case it's winter and there is no heat), cell phone with chargers, antibacterial hand wipes, manual can-opener (if your kit includes canned food), garbage bags for personal sanitation, diapers for infants, wrench or pliers to turn off utilities, cash and/or traveler's checks

## Week 2: City and State information

Think about getting involved in preparing our community. You can join *citizen core*, a grassroots program developed by the Department of Homeland Security. This program allows citizens to get emergency response training, participate in community exercises, and volunteer to support local first responders. For more information, check out the following websites.

### Michigan Citizen Corps

4000 Collins Rd  
Lansing, MI 48913  
(517) 336-6429

[http://www.michigan.gov/mcsc/0,1607,7-137-6116\\_23782-85274--,00.html](http://www.michigan.gov/mcsc/0,1607,7-137-6116_23782-85274--,00.html)

### Michigan's Preparedness Website

[www.michigan.gov/prepares](http://www.michigan.gov/prepares)

**Michigan State Police, Emergency Management and Homeland Security**

Division

4000 Collins Rd.

Lansing, MI 48910

(517) 336-6198

<http://www.michigan.gov/emhsd>

**Emergency Management Division**

987 S. Raisinville Rd

Monroe, MI 48161

Voice: (734) 240-3135

Toll Free: (888) 354-5500 x3135

Fax: (734) 241-7136

E-mail: [emd@monroemi.org](mailto:emd@monroemi.org)

<http://www.co.monroe.mi.us/Monroe/default.aspx?PageId=47>



**What to add to your emergency kit:** contact information for your state and local health departments, police force, and emergency management divisions

**Week 3: Keeping food safe**

Fill plastic containers with water, leaving an inch or so of space to allow the water to expand. Place these containers in the freezer. Pull some out and place in the refrigerator (leave some in the freezer) to help keep food cold in case of a power outage. Open the freezer and refrigerator as little as possible. Refrigerated food should be ok if the power is out for **4 hours** or less. After that, discard all refrigerated food. However, perishable foods like meat, poultry, fish, eggs, and leftovers should be discarded after being in a temperature above 40 degrees Fahrenheit for more than **2 hours**. For frozen foods, check the temperature on the freezer when it comes back on. If it reads 40 degrees Fahrenheit or lower, the food should be safe. Do not eat any food that has come into contact with flood water.



**What to add to your emergency kit:** non-perishable food (at least 1200 calories worth per person per day—enough for 3 days is recommended), water (one gallon per person per day—3days worth),—don't forget read-to-use infant formula and baby food depending on the age of your children. If you have pets you will also want canned food and bottled water for them.

For more information:

[http://www.fsis.usda.gov/Factsheets/keeping\\_food\\_Safe\\_during\\_an\\_emergency/index.asp](http://www.fsis.usda.gov/Factsheets/keeping_food_Safe_during_an_emergency/index.asp)

<http://www.ready.gov/america/beinformed/blackout.html>

## Week 4: Safe drinking water

The best way to ensure clean and safe water is to have an emergency supply of bottled water for your family. However, if you do not have a water supply, or it runs out in a prolonged power outage, you can purify tap water. You can boil tap water for at least a minute—water should be bubbling and rolling. NEVER operate gasoline or charcoal devices inside your home. It is a fire hazard, AND the carbon monoxide released from these sources can build up and poison people and animals. If you cannot boil water you can use 6 drops newly purchased bleach (unscented 4-6% chlorine) per gallon of water. Stir well and let stand for at least 30 minutes before use. If neither of these is possible, you can use water purification tablets from your local pharmacy—follow the instructions.



***What to add to your emergency kit:*** water purification tablets, bottled water

For more information:

[http://www.health.gov.on.ca/english/public/pub/watersafe/watersafe\\_power.html](http://www.health.gov.on.ca/english/public/pub/watersafe/watersafe_power.html)