

> COOKING DURING A POWER CUT

If you have an electric cooker it will not operate during a power cut. Take extra care with any alternative cooking methods. Keep a stock of non-perishable canned and packet foods, and have a manual can opener ready.

Never use a camping stove, portable barbeque, lit charcoal or generator in an enclosed space like your home. These are designed for outdoor use only. These devices require adequate ventilation and can produce poisonous carbon monoxide. If you are using a camping stove outdoors, take extra care. Never change camping gas cartridges indoor or near ignition sources.

If you suspect that there is a gas leak, turn off all appliances and the main cylinder valve, open all doors and windows and do not smoke or turn on any electrical switches or appliances until you have been given the all clear. The power cut could end at any time.

> PORTABLE HEATER

- Keep heaters away from curtains and furniture and never use them for drying clothes.
- Switch off portable heaters when you go out, are not in the room, or go to bed.
- If possible, secure portable heaters in position to avoid the risk of them being knocked over.
- Only use gas or paraffin heaters in well-ventilated areas. Heaters consume oxygen and in enclosed spaces can produce harmful gases and/or cause carbon monoxide poisoning.
- Fit a Carbon Monoxide detector in all rooms containing gas or paraffin heaters.
- Never use portable gas cylinder heaters in high rise flats.
- Always change gas cylinders in the open air. Never change gas cylinders in an enclosed space.
- Never use a camping heater indoors. These burn fuel and can produce poisonous carbon monoxide.
- Never move a bottled gas or oil heater when it is lit.

> KEEP IN TOUCH

During a power cut regular sources of information like television, radio, phone and internet may not be accessible. Keep informed with a portable radio tuned to your local radio station. In addition to battery operated radios, options include wind-up or solar-powered radios.

A manual wind-up charger or an in-car charger will keep your mobile phone on – remember to remove the phone when fully charged to conserve the car's battery.

> HELP & SERVICE

Keep a note handy of the power company's helpline – they may be able to say when the electricity will be restored, or there could be a message with the latest information. Save these numbers to your phone. Keep a copy of this leaflet, or these numbers, in your Power Cut kit or somewhere which is easily accessible.

NORTHERN SCOTLAND

Scottish and Southern Power Distribution

From a landline: **0800 300 999**

From a mobile phone: **0345 072 1901**

www.ssepd.co.uk/powertrack

CENTRAL & SOUTHERN SCOTLAND

SP Energy Networks

From a landline: **0800 092 9290**

From a mobile phone: **0330 1010 222**

www.spenergynetworks.co.uk/pages/power_cuts

Visit www.firescotland.gov.uk for practical fire safety advice. Or talk to your local firefighters. You'll find contact details on the website, in your local library and in the phone book.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format or a version in another language, please contact **0800 0731 999**.



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To book a **FREE HOME FIRE SAFETY VISIT**
Call **0800 0731 999**
Text '**FIRE**' to **80800**
or visit www.firescotland.gov.uk



@**SFRSYourSafety**



Fact.

Taking steps now **before a power cut happens** can ensure you are as safe as possible.



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➤ PREPARING FOR A POWER CUT

Take steps now so that you are prepared if a power cut does happen.

- Keep at least one torch with fresh batteries in a place where you can reach it easily. If more than one person lives in your home consider having additional torches for each person.
- Consider purchasing battery operated lights.
- Have a plentiful supply of new batteries for torches, lights and radios in the house, and keep them all in an accessible place.
- Keep at least one telephone that will work in a power cut, for example a traditional plug-in landline phone or mobile telephone. Many modern telephones will not work without mains electricity.
- Consider assembling a Power Cut kit which is easy to locate containing torches, battery operated lights and a traditional plug-in landline phone.
- If you plan to use gas or paraffin heaters fit a Carbon Monoxide detector in all rooms where heaters may be used.
- Consider keeping a stock of non-perishable canned and packet foods, and a manual can opener.
- Do check if any vulnerable neighbours are also well prepared.

➤ SMOKE & HEAT ALARMS

Make sure you have working interlinked smoke and heat alarms. Test them once a week.

If you have mains wired alarms, they will have a battery back up power source. Keep spare batteries. Sealed battery alarms have long-life lithium batteries, which can be up to 10 years.

Smoke and heat alarms will still operate during a power cut, giving you early warning if fire does break out.

➤ SWITCH OFF DURING A POWER CUT

Turn off electrical equipment, except a light or a radio so you know when power is restored. Switch off electric cooker hobs.

➤ LOOK OUT FOR NEIGHBOURS

If you have vulnerable or elderly neighbours you could help them by ensuring they are safe, comfortable and, wherever possible, have some food or a warm drink, even if it's a flask of hot water.

➤ LIGHT DURING A POWER CUT

In the event of a power failure, use battery operated lights or torches as an alternative light source. Other options include a wind-up torch, glow sticks or a shake light.

If you must use candles, make sure you follow the safety guidelines listed inside this leaflet. If you use a gas or paraffin lamp make sure it is working properly and used in a well ventilated area. If you want to subdue the lighting, a low wattage bulb should be used. Never position lights or bulbs near curtains and other fabrics. Never cover your lights with fabric as they can overheat and catch fire.

➤ HEAT DURING A POWER CUT

During a power cut, a house without heat being generated will soon get cold. So it's important not just to stay warm, but to stay warm safely. Dress warmly using several layers of clothing.

Keep warm by staying in one room, or even in bed. Central heating boilers won't work without electricity. A blanket on the duvet will stave off the night chill. Close curtains and shutters (if you have them) to reduce heat loss through the windows.

➤ CANDLES

Candles are often used during power cuts. Battery operated lights or torches are a safer option. But if you are using candles, it is important to use them safely.

- Make sure lit candles are kept in candle holders and can't be knocked over. You may wish to ensure you have additional candle holders ready to use in the event of a power cut.
- Do not use candles as a light source when you are moving from room to room. Use a torch instead. Never move lit candles.
- Keep candles well away from anything that could catch fire, like curtains, cards, cushions, TVs or even shelves.
- Never leave a lit candle alone – even for a few seconds. During a power cut it may be tempting to leave candles lit around the house. But candles can spark, or fall over, causing a fire. Only light candles in a room you are using.
- If you're going out, or going to sleep, make sure ALL candles are properly put out first.
- Never leave a burning candle in a bedroom.
- Keep candles, matches and cigarette lighters out of reach of children and never place lit candles where they can be knocked over by children or household pets.
- Always put candles on a heat resistant surface/ holders. Be especially careful with night lights and tea lights, which can get hot enough to melt plastic or ignite combustible materials.
- Scented candles turn to liquid in order to release their fragrance, so always burn them in a suitable glass or metal container that can withstand the heat of the liquid and that the liquid cannot lead from.
- Outdoor candles should never be used indoors.
- Don't lean across a candle – you could set your hair or clothes on fire.
- Always use a candle snuffer or a spoon to extinguish candles or tea lights.