

Important Information In the Event of a Power Grid Takedown!

By Daisy Luther



Daisy Luther is the Author of [Be Ready for Anything](#) and [The Blackout Book](#). Make a copy of this (hard copy printed) should an emergency result in the national power grid be taken down. This hopefully will not be the Cyber Polygon 2021 exercise that Klaus Schwab of the World Economic Forum predicted that would be worse than Event 201 of a pandemic.

Sometimes people think that a summer power outage is easier to deal with than a winter one. After all, in the summer, you don't have to worry about freezing to death, which is a very real threat during a long-lasting winter outage. We experienced a two day loss of the parsonage old A/C last summer when the temperature was in the high 80's outside, and inside it was 87. I was dealing with early symptoms of dehydration so I can state the importance of being prepared.

However, a summer power outage carries its own set of problems. Foremost are heat-related illnesses and the higher potential of spoilage for your food. Even if you aren't convinced that hardcore preparedness is for you, it would still be difficult to argue against the possibility of a disaster that takes out the power for a couple of weeks. [Basic emergency preparedness is important for everyone](#), not just us "crazy preppers."

Just ask the people who lived through the Derecho of 2012 how unpleasant it was

Severe, fast-moving thunderstorms (called derechos) swept through Indiana, Ohio, Virginia, West Virginia, Pennsylvania, Maryland, New Jersey, and Washington DC. Millions lost power, an estimated 4 million for an entire week. As if a week-long power outage wasn't miserable enough, that part of the country was in the midst of a record-setting heatwave during the time period.

Also keep in mind that summer stresses our fragile power grid to the max, as everyone increases their usage of electricity to try and keep cool with air conditioners and fans. This ups the chances of an outage even when there's not a cloud in the sky.

Back in 2003, a software bug caused an extremely widespread power outage in the middle of August. It was a very hot day, and increased energy demand overloaded the system. Because of the issue with the software, engineers were not alerted of this, and what should have been a small local outage turned into an event that took out power for over 10 million Canadians and 45 million Americans. I remember this one clearly because the little sub shop beside my workplace gave away all the perishable food that they had out at the time before it spoiled and I took home fresh sandwiches for my girls' dinner that night. We sweated uncomfortably through the next two days until the power was restored.

Beware of dehydration and heat-related illnesses

One of the most serious concerns that sets apart a summer power outage from that of other times of the year is the heat. When you don't have so much as a fan to move the air around, heat-related illnesses and [serious levels of dehydration](#) are strong possibilities. From my book, [The Prepper's Water Survival Guide](#), here's an excerpt from the chapter on dehydration:

Dehydration is the state that occurs when you use or lose more fluid than you take in, and your body doesn't have enough water and other fluids to carry out its normal functions. Your electrolytes are out of balance., which can lead to increasingly serious problems.

Symptoms of electrolyte imbalances include dizziness, fatigue, nausea (with or without vomiting), constipation, dry mouth, dry skin, muscle weakness, stiff or aching joints, confusion, delirium, rapid heart rate, twitching, blood pressure changes, seizures, and convulsions.

Dehydration can lead to very serious side effects, including death.

Following are the most common dehydration-related ailments.

Heat cramps: Heat cramps are painful, brief muscle cramps. Muscles may spasm or jerk involuntarily. Heat cramps can occur during exercise or work in a hot environment or begin a few hours following such activities.

Heat exhaustion: Often accompanied by dehydration, heat exhaustion is a heat-related illness that can occur after you've been exposed to high temperatures.

There are two types of heat exhaustion:

Water depletion. Signs include excessive thirst, weakness, headache, and loss of consciousness.

Salt depletion. Signs include nausea and vomiting, muscle cramps, and dizziness.

Heat stroke: Heat stroke is the most serious form of heat injury and is considered a medical emergency. Heat stroke results from prolonged exposure to high temperatures—usually in combination with dehydration—which leads to failure of the body’s temperature control system. The medical definition of heat stroke is a core body temperature greater than 105°F, with complications involving the central nervous system that occur after exposure to high temperatures. Other common symptoms include nausea, seizures, confusion, disorientation, and, sometimes, loss of consciousness or coma.

Dehydration can lead to other potentially lethal complications.

[The Mayo Clinic offers the following examples:](#)

Seizures: Electrolytes—such as potassium and sodium—help carry electrical signals from cell to cell. If your electrolytes are out of balance, the normal electrical messages can become mixed up, which can lead to involuntary muscle contractions, and, sometimes, loss of consciousness.

Low blood volume (hypovolemic shock): This is one of the most serious, and sometimes life-threatening, complications of dehydration. It occurs when low blood volume causes a drop in blood pressure and a drop in the amount of oxygen in your body.

Swelling of the brain (cerebral edema): Sometimes, when you’re taking in fluids again after being dehydrated, the body tries to pull too much water back into your cells. This can cause some cells to swell and rupture. The consequences are especially grave when brain cells are affected.

Kidney failure: This potentially life-threatening problem occurs when your kidneys are no longer able to remove excess fluids and waste from your blood.

Coma and death: When not treated promptly and appropriately, severe dehydration can be fatal.

How to Treat Dehydration

People who are suffering from dehydration must replace fluids and electrolytes. The most common way to do this is through oral rehydration therapy (ORT). In extreme cases, fluids must be given intravenously. In a disaster situation, hospitals may not be readily available, so every effort should be made to prevent the situation from reaching that level of severity.

Humans cannot survive without electrolytes, which are minerals in your blood and other bodily fluids that carry an electric charge. They are important because they are what your cells (especially those in your nerves, heart, and muscles) use to maintain voltages across cell membranes and to carry electrical impulses (nerve impulses and muscle contractions) across themselves and to other cells. Electrolytes, especially sodium, also help your body maintain its water balance.

Water itself does not contain electrolytes, but dehydration can cause serious electrolyte imbalances.

In most situations, avoid giving the dehydrated person salt tablets. Fresh, cool water is the best cure. In extreme temperatures or after very strenuous activities, electrolyte replacement drinks can be given. Sports drinks such as Gatorade can help replenish lost electrolytes. For children, rehydration beverages like Pedialyte can be helpful. ([Source](#))

Here's some [more thorough information on heat-related illnesses, how to prevent them, and how to treat them](#).

For electrolyte replacement, [Tess Pennington offers these recipes for DIY rehydration powders that you can add to drinks](#).

Store lots of water

One of the best ways to avoid the heat-related problems above is to store lots of water. You can't always rely on the faucet in the kitchen. In the event of a disaster, the water may not run from the taps, and if it does, it might not be safe to drink, depending on the situation. If there is a boil order in place, remember that if the power is out, boiling your water may not be as easy as turning on your stove. If you are on a well and don't have a back-up in place, you won't have running water.

Each family should store a two week supply of water. The rule of thumb for drinking water is 1 gallon per day, per person. Don't forget to stock water for your pets, also.

You can create your water supply very inexpensively. Many people use clean 2 liter soda pop bottles to store tap water. Others purchase the large 5-gallon jugs of filtered water from the grocery store and use them with a [top-loading water dispenser](#). Consider a [gravity fed water filtration device](#) and [water purification tablets](#) as well.

Because water is kind of my thing lately, you can find lots more information on this topic [HERE](#).

How to keep cooler during the blackout

This is easier said than done when it's 105 and you can't even run a fan. Here are some ways to keep a little bit cooler when the grid is down:

Get battery-operated fans. (And lots of batteries.) A battery-operated fan can help cool you down, particularly if you get yourself wet first. They're reasonably inexpensive and work well, although I recommend spending a bit more than for the cheap ones at the dollar store. [This one](#) is big enough to reach more than one part of your body at a time and can help you get to sleep. 6 D batteries will run it for about 40 hours. [These tabletop fans are rechargeable](#) (so you will either need an off-grid way to recharge them or you'll need backups), [these handheld fans](#) have a misting option (also rechargeable) and these handheld fans are powered for up to 8 hours by 2 AA batteries [these handheld fans](#) are powered for up to 8 hours by 2 AA batteries.

Stock up on cooling towels. I picked up some [these cooling towels](#) for use when I was working outside in the garden. I was stunned at how well they work. All you do is get them wet, wring them out, and give them a snap, then they cool you down, no power or refrigeration required. You can use them over and over again. They also come in [these bands](#) that can be worn around your head or neck.

Channel your inner Southern belle. Slowly fan yourself with [a handheld fan](#). Mint juleps are optional.

Keep hydrated. Your body needs the extra water to help produce sweat, which cools you off.

Change your schedule. There's a reason that people who live near the equator close down their businesses and enjoy a midday siesta. Take a tepid shower and then, without drying off, lay down and try to take a nap. At the very least, do a quiet activity.

Play in the water. Either place a kiddie pool in a shaded part of the yard or use the bathtub indoors. Find a nearby creek or pond for wading or swimming. (Note: Playing in the water isn't just for kids!)

Soak your feet. A foot bath full of tepid water can help cool you down.

Avoid heavy meals. Your body has to work hard to digest heavy, rich meals, and this raises your temperature. Be gentle on your system with light, cool meals like salads and fruit.

Make sure your window screens are in good condition. You're going to need to have your windows open, but fighting off insects when you're trying to sleep is a miserable and frustrating endeavor.

Scott Kelley from [Graywolf Survival](#) has super-easy instructions for making your own air conditioner that will help cool down one room as long as the power is still on. His design doesn't require ice, it's VERY budget-friendly, and he offers suggestions for alternative power, as well. [It's a must-read!](#)

Be very conscious of food safety

If a power outage lasts for more than 4 hours, you need to err on the side of caution with regard to refrigerated and frozen food. Coolers can help – you can put your most expensive perishables in a cooler and fill it with ice from the freezer to extend its lifespan. Whatever you do, don't open the doors to the refrigerator and freezer. This will help it to maintain a cooler temperature for a longer time.

[According to the Red Cross](#), if your freezer is half-filled and is not opened the entire time that the power is out, the food in it will remain sufficiently frozen for up to 24 hours. If it is completely filled, your food should remain safe for up to 48 hours. If the worst happens and your freezer full of meat does spoil, keep in mind that most homeowner's and renter's insurance policies will pay for their replacement, but unless you've lost a whole lot or your deductible is very small, it may not be worth making a claim.

I strongly recommend the purchase of a digital refrigerator thermometer

This has many kitchen uses, but in the event of a disaster is worth its weight in gold for determining food safety. I have [one of these](#) in the fridge and one in the freezer. You can use your thermometer with this chart (print it out so you have it on hand in the event of a down-grid emergency) to determine the safety of your food. (The chart is from [FoodSafety.gov](#))

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Food Categories	Specific Foods	Held above 40 °F for over 2 hours
MEAT, POULTRY, SEAFOOD	Raw or leftover cooked meat, poultry, fish, or seafood; soy meat substitutes	Discard
	Thawing meat or poultry	Discard
	Salads: Meat, tuna, shrimp, chicken, or egg salad	Discard
	Gravy, stuffing, broth	Discard
	Lunchmeats, hot dogs, bacon, sausage, dried beef	Discard
	Pizza – with any topping	Discard
	Canned hams labeled “Keep Refrigerated”	Discard
	Canned meats and fish, opened	Discard
	Casseroles, soups, stews	Discard
	CHEESE	Soft Cheeses: blue/bleu, Roquefort, Brie, Camembert, cottage, cream, Edam, Monterey Jack, ricotta, mozzarella, Muenster, Neufchatel, queso blanco, queso fresco

Food Categories	Specific Foods	Held above 40 °F for over 2 hours
	Hard Cheeses: Cheddar, Colby, Swiss, Parmesan, provolone, Romano	Safe
	Processed Cheeses	Safe
	Shredded Cheeses	Discard
	Low-fat Cheeses	Discard
	Grated Parmesan, Romano, or combination (in can or jar)	Safe
DAIRY	Milk, cream, sour cream, buttermilk, evaporated milk, yogurt, eggnog, soy milk	Discard
	Butter, margarine	Safe
	Baby formula, opened	Discard
EGGS	Fresh eggs, hard-cooked in shell, egg dishes, egg products	Discard
	Custards and puddings, quiche	Discard
FRUITS	Fresh fruits, cut	Discard
	Fruit juices, opened	Safe
	Canned fruits, opened	Safe
	Fresh fruits, coconut, raisins, dried fruits, candied fruits, dates	Safe
SAUCES, SPREADS, JAMS	Opened mayonnaise, tartar sauce, horseradish	Discard if above 50 °F for over 8 hrs.
	Peanut butter	Safe
	Jelly, relish, taco sauce, mustard, catsup, olives, pickles	Safe
	Worcestershire, soy, barbecue, hoisin sauces	Safe
	Fish sauces, oyster sauce	Discard
	Opened vinegar-based dressings	Safe
	Opened creamy-based dressings	Discard
	Spaghetti sauce, opened jar	Discard
BREAD, CAKES, COOKIES, PASTA, GRAINS	Bread, rolls, cakes, muffins, quick breads, tortillas	Safe
	Refrigerator biscuits, rolls, cookie dough	Discard
	Cooked pasta, rice, potatoes	Discard
	Pasta salads with mayonnaise or vinaigrette	Discard
	Fresh pasta	Discard
	Cheesecake	Discard
	Breakfast foods –waffles, pancakes, bagels	Safe
PIES, PASTRY	Pastries, cream filled	Discard
	Pies – custard, cheese filled, or chiffon; quiche	Discard
	Pies, fruit	Safe

Food Categories	Specific Foods	Held above 40 °F for over 2 hours
VEGETABLES	Fresh mushrooms, herbs, spices	Safe
	Greens, pre-cut, pre-washed, packaged	Discard
	Vegetables, raw	Safe
	Vegetables, cooked; tofu	Discard
	Vegetable juice, opened	Discard
	Baked potatoes	Discard
	Commercial garlic in oil	Discard
	Potato salad	Discard
	Casseroles, soups, stews	Discard

Other methods of preserving food

Another way to combat the potential losses of a long-term summer power outage is to use other methods for preserving food. Canning and dehydration are not grid-dependent and can save you a whole lot of money and prevent a mess of rotting meat in your freezer.

If a power-outage looks like it's going to be lasting for quite some time, you can be proactive if you have canning supplies on hand and a propane burner, and you can pressure can your meat outdoors to preserve it. (Here's how to pressure can [roasts](#) and [chicken](#).) If you decide to get one, [THIS PROPANE BURNER](#) is probably the closest one to a kitchen stove out there. It works well for keeping your product cooking at a steady temperature. Don't cheap out on this purchase, or you will stand there in front of this burner for a long, frustrating time and still end up with food that has not been canned safely. Be very careful to supervise the canning pot: you don't want the pressure to drop to an unsafe level and you want to keep kids and pets away from this project. Added bonus – when you have a propane burner like this, the sky is the limit as far as cooking in a power outage.

Some stuff is the same as prepping for any other power outage

Many preparedness concerns are the same, no matter what time of the year your power outage occurs. Here are some of the basic things you need for any power outage:

Food and a way to prepare it

There are two schools of thought regarding food during a power outage. One: you need a cooking method that does not require the grid to be functioning. Two: you can store food that doesn't require cooking.

If you opt for a secondary cooking method, be sure that you have enough fuel for two weeks. Store foods that do not require long cooking times – for example, dried beans would use a great deal of fuel, but canned beans could be warmed up, or even eaten cold. In the summer you don't want to rely on a cooking method that heats up your house, so look to things like outdoor barbecues or solar cookers.

Learn more about building your pantry [HERE](#).

Click [HERE](#) for a short-term food storage list
Click [HERE](#) to find a list of meals that require no cooking.

Sanitation needs

A common cause of illness, and even death, during a down-grid situation is lack of sanitation.

For cleaning, reduce your need to wash things. Stock up on paper plates, paper towels, and disposable cups and flatware. Keep some disinfecting cleaning wipes and sprays (I don't recommend using antibacterial products on a regular basis, however in the event of an emergency they can help to keep you healthy.) Use hand sanitizer after using the bathroom and before handling food or beverages – there may be a lot more germs afoot in a disaster.

Look at your options for sanitation

Does your toilet still flush when the electricity is out? Many people discovered the hard way that the toilets didn't work when the sewage backed up in the high-rises in New York City in the aftermath of Hurricane Sandy. At our cabin, the toilet won't flush without power because the pump is electric.

If you are on a septic system, with no risk of the toilet backing up into the house, simply store some water for flushing in the bathroom. (At the first sign of a storm, we always fill the bathtub for this purpose.) Add the water to the tank so that you can flush.

If this is not an option, check out [THIS ARTICLE](#), which explains how to take care of potty needs if the toilet won't flush and you live somewhere that you can't just go out in the back 40 to do your business.

Light

Lighting is absolutely vital, especially if there are children in the house. Nothing is more frightening than being completely in the dark during a stressful situation. Fortunately, it's one of the easiest things to plan for, as well as one of the least expensive.

Some lighting solutions are:

Garden stake solar lights

Flashlights (don't forget batteries)

[Hand crank/solar lantern](#)

Other options are long-burning candles or kerosene lamps, but during a summer outage, they would be less desirable, since they add heat to an already overly warm situation.

First Aid kit

It's important to have a basic first aid kit on hand at all times, but particularly in the event of an emergency. Your kit should include basic wound care items like bandages, antibiotic ointments, and sprays. As well, if you use them, keep on hand a supply of

basic over-the-counter medications, like pain relief capsules, cold medicine, cough syrup, anti-nausea pills, and allergy medication.

If you want to put together a more advanced medical kit, you can find a list [HERE](#).

Special needs

This is something that will be unique to every family. Consider the things that are needed on a daily basis in your household. It might be prescription medications, diapers, or special foods. If you have pets, you'll need supplies for them too. The best way to figure out what you need is to jot things down as you use them over the course of a week or so.

Entertainment

Nothing grates on a parent's nerves more than a refrain of, "I'm booooooreddd." Many kids are accustomed to almost-constant electronic entertainment, so the loss of that can be quite stressful.

Keep a box of off-grid entertainment supplies in an easy-to-access place. Make one up for the different members of the family. Make these items things that the kids are not allowed to play with at any other time so that they are novel and interesting when the time comes to use them. Include things like

- stationary supplies
- notebooks
- pens and pencils
- sharpeners
- crayons or coloring pencils
- markers
- glue sticks
- glitter
- puzzles
- activity books
- games
- stickers

Make it a treasure trove! Be sure you include all of the supplies needed for each activity because it's hard to find things when your home is only lit by candlelight. Here are [some more ideas for power outage fun](#).

Any other suggestions for a summer power outage?

Have you been through a summer power outage that lasted longer than a couple of hours? Do you have some suggestions to add? Please share them in the comments section below.

Source: [The Organic Prepper](#)

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The military motto is a word to the wise, be prepared. I hope that this information will not be required but since I posted the article on **Prepping for a Cyber Pandemic: Cyber Polygon 2021 to Stage Supply Chain Attack Simulation**, I keep seeing articles on the subject of an EMP and power outages. Whether is just because of the heat wave on the country west of the Mississippi River or globalist predictive programming being flaunted on the Internet, I suggest a word of caution, and at least have a hard copy of this handy. If the grid goes down, we will be in the dark in many ways. Often it is the simple things that get over-looked and so the information can serve as a reminder.

Pray for God's provision in the days ahead.

Blessings,

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