

# What is a power outage and what to do

Important information to help communities prepare and stay safe in a power outage



## What is a power outage

An outage occurs when electricity or gas stops being supplied to an end-user, such as a home, a business, or an entire area. Extreme weather can cause unplanned outages. Power may also have to be turned off in some areas until the grid has been stabilised or repairs can be safely completed.

## What to do

### Before

- **Know who your energy provider is** and sign up to receive direct updates via SMS and/or email.
- **Prepare an emergency kit** with essential items such as a charged mobile phone with spare power banks; a battery-powered radio to stay informed about weather and emergency alerts; battery-powered torches; and health-related supplies such as prescription medications. It's also helpful to have a list of emergency and important phone numbers written down.
- **Prepare your home, business, and property** by ensuring your car has fuel or is fully charged, you have backup methods to safely prepare food; know how to turn off power to your home; and have manual overrides for entry and exits to your property. If you rely on an electric pump, make sure you store enough water for your needs while the power is off.
- **Check on your vulnerable neighbours** to ensure they are safe and up-to-date.

### During

- **Call Triple Zero (000) in life-threatening or emergency situations**, and always follow emergency services' advice and instructions.
- **Get updates** from your electricity or gas provider (contact details on the top of your energy bill), and use your phone or a battery-powered radio to receive emergency updates.
- **Avoid damaged wires and fallen powerlines.** Never enter flood waters as damaged electricity infrastructure can cause electric shock.
- **Look after your home** by switching off appliances that can be damaged during power surges, these include TVs, computers and Wi-Fi routers.
- **Do not attempt to use any external power generation sources indoors**, such as a battery or an external or portable generator.
- **Run your vehicle outside with good ventilation** when charging devices to avoid exhaust fumes.
- **Follow the NSW Food Authority's advice on food safety.** Avoid opening the fridge and freezer.

### After

- **Follow** emergency services and your network provider's instructions.
- **Inspect your property** for any risks or issues caused by the outage, and contact your electricity provider for help. Do not attempt to repair electrical issues yourself.

For more information visit the Climate and Energy Action website:  
[energy.nsw.gov.au/power-outage](https://energy.nsw.gov.au/power-outage)

