

Tips to follow during outages

The North Dakota Department of Emergency Services has issued the following advice to people in case of power outages:

- Report downed power lines to local power companies or call 911. Never approach downed lines.
- Never use generators, ovens, grills or other gasoline, propane or charcoal-burning devices inside your home, garage or carport or near doors, windows or vents. They produce carbon monoxide, an odorless, colorless gas that can be lethal to humans and animals.
- If using gas or wood-burning fireplaces, ensure they are properly ventilated.
- Do not use generators hooked directly to a home unless it has been installed by a licensed electrical contractor. Improper generator hook-ups can endanger the lives of residents and utility employees working to restore power.
- Never plug a generator into a wall outlet, as serious injury can result due to current feed back into electrical lines. Lights and appliances should be connected directly to generators.
- Anyone who chooses to evacuate a home or business should be aware that insurance policies generally require steps to prevent damage from occurring to a structure. Generally, this means maintaining heat when possible and shutting off and draining water systems.

The best solution is for a licensed plumber to winterize the home, if a plumber is not available, water should be shut off outside the building, if possible at the “stop box” or well. Power or gas to water heaters should be shut off, and the heater and all lines should be drained. Appliances, such as water heaters, refrigerators, dehumidifiers, and clothes and dish washers, should be winterized per manufacturers’ instructions. Inform the power company to shut off electricity immediately and call a licensed electrical contractor in an electrical fuse panel has been submerged by water.

Anyone evacuating a home should remember to take all medication and make provisions for pets.

- Have a full tank of gas in a vehicle, as well as a charged cell phone and batteries for radios and flashlights.
- Contact your county emergency manager for details on available shelters and for other information.