



Public Health Brief

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September is National Preparedness Month:

Power Sources

According to the [U.S. Energy Information Administration](#), the average U.S. electricity customer was without power for 250 minutes and experienced 1.3 outage in 2016. A [power outage](#) can disrupt medical services, close pharmacies, and create a life-threatening predicament for the [over 2.5 million people](#) who rely on electric-powered medical equipment. Prepare for a prolonged blackout with an emergency power plan and back up and alternative power sources for your cellphone, refrigerator, and medical equipment.

The Basics

- A flashlight or head lamp
- Extra batteries in standard sizes, such as AA and AAA
- Hearing aid batteries
- Car charger(s) and adapters for electric-dependent equipment and devices
- Jump starter and/or jumper cables
- A battery-powered or hand-crank NOAA weather radio with USB port(s)
- A [generator](#)
- Battery-powered smoke alarms and [carbon monoxide \(CO\)](#) detectors
- Appliance thermometers for your refrigerator and freezer
- A surge protector power strip(s)

Quick Tips

- Pack flashlights or a battery-powered lantern for emergency lighting. [Candles](#) pose a fire hazard.



Public Health

Prevent. Promote. Protect.

Alpine County Health Department, 75-B Diamond Valley Rd., Markleeville, CA 96120

Alpine County Board of Supervisors, Phone: (530) 694-2281

District 1: Donald M. Jardine, District 2: Ron Hames, District 3: Katherine Rakow,

District 4: Terry Woodrow, District 5: David Griffith

- Create an [Emergency Power Planning Checklist](#) for your medical devices, including breathing machines, power wheelchairs and scooters, nebulizers, and oxygen or home [dialysis](#) equipment.
- Read the user manual or contact the manufacturer to find out if your medical device is compatible with batteries or a generator.
- Contact your local fire department, and power and water companies if you use electric-powered medical equipment. Some utility companies keep a “priority reconnection service” list of power-dependent customers.
- If possible, buy manual alternatives for your electric devices that are portable, dependable, and durable. For example, a manual wheelchair, walker or cane as a backup for an electric scooter.
- Fully charge your electronic devices, medical equipment, and back-up power sources if you know a disaster is coming.
- Place plastic bags filled with water in the freezer to keep foods cold in a power outage. Drink the water when the ice melts.

Resources

- [What You Need to Know When the Power Goes Out Unexpectedly](#)
- [Preventing Carbon Monoxide Poisoning After an Emergency](#)
- [Electrical Safety and Generators](#)
- [Home Use Devices: How to Prepare for and Handle Power Outages](#) (FDA)
- [Tips about Medical Devices and Storms](#) (FDA)
- [Refrigerated Food and Power Outages: When to Save and When to Throw Out](#) (HHS)
- [Homeowners: Respond to Power Outages](#) (DOE)
- [Homeowners: Choosing the Right Backup Generator](#) (DOE)
- [Homeowners: Alternative Backup Power Options](#) (DOE)



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