

# The First Hour of a Winter Power Outage: in order

Tape this inside a kitchen cabinet. Steps follow the American Red Cross power-outage guidance and Ready.gov's winter-weather page.

| Minute    | Do this                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             | Done |
|-----------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------|
| 0-5 min   | Street or breaker? Report the outage to the utility. Unplug electronics and furnace controls (surge on return). Leave one lamp switched on. Leave gas alone unless told otherwise.                                                                                  | [ ]  |
| 5-10 min  | Fridge and freezer SHUT (about 4 h of cold unopened; full freezer 48 h, half-full 24 h). Cold goods to a sealed cooler on the porch if it is freezing outside. Thermometer in the fridge: over 40 F for 2 h = throw out.                                            | [ ]  |
| 10-25 min | ONE ROOM: smallest, fewest windows. Everyone in, doors shut, towels along gaps, layers and hats on now. NEVER the gas oven, grill, camp stove or generator indoors. Indoor-rated propane heater only with a CO alarm running and the window cracked per its manual. | [ ]  |
| 25-40 min | Phones to low-power. Charge from power bank, laptop, car (outdoors, exhaust clear of snow). Hand-crank radio on for forecast and utility estimates. TEXT the out-of-state contact; do not call.                                                                     | [ ]  |
| 40-55 min | Lanterns placed, headlamp per person. Flashlights, not candles. Fill the bathtub and large pots while pressure holds.                                                                                                                                               | [ ]  |
| 55-60 min | DECIDE before dark: stay, or go to a warming centre or relative. Go if a powered medical device has no backup, if the room cannot be kept warm for the vulnerable, or if the estimate runs past tomorrow with no safe heat.                                         | [ ]  |

## Signs to watch (Ready.gov)

**Hypothermia:** shivering, exhaustion, confusion, fumbling hands, slurred speech, drowsiness; a body temperature below 95 F is an emergency. Warm the centre of the body first: chest, neck, head, groin. **Frostbite:** numbness, white or greyish-yellow skin, firm or waxy skin. Go to a warm room; soak in warm water; do not massage or use a heating pad.

## Numbers to have written down

|                           |  |                       |  |
|---------------------------|--|-----------------------|--|
| Utility outage line       |  | Out-of-state contact  |  |
| Warming centre / relative |  | Neighbour to check on |  |

Free printable from [preparingwithdan.com](https://preparingwithdan.com) | Source and full guide: [preparingwithdan.com/basics/first-hour-winter-power-outage/](https://preparingwithdan.com/basics/first-hour-winter-power-outage/) | Reuse and share freely with attribution.