

**NYSEG** **RGE** AND



*Weathering Storm Emergencies*

# *Storm Emergencies*

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**We have all witnessed the devastating effects of storms in our part of New York State.**

**Lightning, sleet, ice and strong winds attack electric equipment and facilities during these storms, and suddenly power is interrupted.**



We know that life without electricity is inconvenient. We've prepared this booklet to help you weather storm emergencies and unplanned power interruptions. When there is an emergency, we truly appreciate your patience while we diligently make repairs.

When storms strike, NYSEG and RG&E are ready. Our trained crews, on 24-hour standby, respond quickly to any electrical emergency. We have plans and priorities for restoring electricity service safely and efficiently.

Safety for our crews, our customers, and the community is paramount when it comes to restoring power. Our first priority in responding to a power interruption is removing hazards – such as live, fallen power lines – to ensure your safety. We then repair our main facilities that bring electricity to your neighborhood. Next, we work on our local delivery system, including the poles and power lines along streets and roads. We focus first on critical facilities such as hospitals, nursing homes, and fire and power stations. We also focus on areas where we have customers who depend on electrically operated, life-sustaining equipment. Overall it's a time-proven process that ensures we restore your service as quickly, efficiently and safely as possible.

## *Before A Storm Strikes*

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Preparation makes life easier during power interruptions. If a severe storm has been forecast, you may want to consider some of the following suggestions:

- Have flashlights, a battery-operated radio or television and fresh batteries handy. If you must use candles, please be careful and keep them far away from flammable materials and children.
- Store adequate supplies of non-perishable food that need not be refrigerated. Make sure you have a manual can opener.
- Have bottled water for drinking and cooking.
- If an electric pump supplies your water, fill bathtubs and other containers to ensure there is adequate water for washing and toilets.
- Set freezer and refrigerator controls to their coldest setting to extend the length of time the food will keep.
- Unplug sensitive electronic equipment – televisions, microwave ovens, VCRs and computers – that could be damaged by lightning or sudden power surges.
- Have a working telephone. Note: Cordless phones and digital phones will probably not work during a power interruption.
- Know how to manually operate your garage door if you have an electric garage door opener.
- If someone in your home depends on life-sustaining equipment powered by electricity, call us now (see page 7). It's your responsibility to provide an emergency power source during any unplanned power interruption. You should also have a back-up evacuation plan.
- If you're considering an emergency generator, get our free *Emergency Generator Safety* booklet by visiting our Web site or calling us. Improperly connected generators can be dangerous for you, your family and our line crews.

## *If Your Power Is Interrupted*

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- Check with your neighbors to see if their power is out. If it isn't, double check your own circuit breakers or fuse box to ensure you haven't simply blown a fuse or tripped a breaker.
- If power is out to your neighborhood, call us (see page 7).
- Listen to the radio for weather and news updates. (If you don't have a battery-powered radio, briefly use your car radio.)
- Turn off all major appliances, such as air conditioners, electric water heaters, water pumps, refrigerators and freezers. Otherwise circuits may overload when our repair crews restore your service. Some appliances have "off" settings or need to be unplugged. You can turn others off by removing the proper fuse or turning off the correct circuit breaker. Leave a light turned on so that you will know when power is restored.
- Avoid "peeking" into your refrigerator or freezer. If the door is kept shut, food will stay cold or frozen longer.
- NEVER use a natural gas oven for heating and never use charcoal indoors for cooking or heating. In either case, carbon monoxide poisoning could occur.



- **Stay far away and tell others to stay away from downed power lines.**

Even lines that look harmless may be extremely dangerous. Call us immediately to report any downed lines (see page 7).



- NEVER enter a flooded basement. Call us immediately about what must be done to safely restore service to your home (see page 7), don't ever attempt to do it yourself.
- We are responsible for repairs from the utility pole to the connection at your home. You are responsible for any repairs from the connection to the meter. If you suspect damage between the connection and the meter, call a licensed electrician so that repairs can be made before our crews attempt to restore your service.

## *If Power Is Interrupted in the Winter*

Interruptions to electricity service in the winter pose unique challenges. Here are a few thoughts that will make the situation easier to bear.



- ⊗ NEVER use a natural gas oven for heating and never use charcoal indoors for cooking or heating. In either case, carbon monoxide poisoning could occur.
- During an extended power interruption, stay at another location (with a relative, friend, or neighbor who has electricity). You may want to consider going to a hotel or an emergency shelter.
- To avoid hypothermia, wear layers of dry clothes and a hat. Use blankets. Hypothermia, caused by exposure to cold, lowers your body temperature and can seriously threaten your health. Infants and the elderly are especially at risk. Warning signs of hypothermia include slurred speech, drowsiness, and disorientation.
- If you use an alternate-heating source, such as a fireplace, wood stove or kerosene heater, be sure to provide adequate ventilation. Otherwise, carbon monoxide poisoning could occur.
- ⊗ NEVER burn trash or plastic. Burn only seasoned wood in a fireplace.
- Use a fireplace screen. Keep the damper open.
- Shut doors to unused rooms and close the drapes to retain heat in the home.
- Let water trickle from faucets to avoid frozen or burst pipes.
- Clear snow and ice away from dryer and other appliance vents.
- Check on your neighbors, especially if they are elderly and live alone.

## *After Our Repair Crews Restore Your Power*

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Once your service has been restored, you should:

- Turn appliances on **one at a time** to avoid overloading your circuits.
- NEVER enter a flooded basement. Call us immediately about what must be done to safely restore service (see page 7), and don't ever attempt to do it yourself.
- Reset your refrigerator and freezer controls to normal.
- Replenish your home's emergency supplies.

If your neighbors get their power back, but you don't, call us to report it (see page 7).

As power is restored, it may take some time for our system to return to normal. Trees weakened by the storm may fall resulting in additional power interruptions.



# *Important Emergency Numbers*

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Use these telephone numbers to report power interruptions or other emergencies.



**NYSEG Electric Interruption or Electric Emergencies**

**1.800.572.1131** (24 hours a day, every day)

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**NYSEG Natural Gas Emergencies or If You  
Smell Natural Gas**

**1.800.572.1121** (24 hours a day, every day)

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**NYSEG Hearing and Speech-Impaired (TTY) -  
New York Relay Service**

**Dial 711**



**RG&E Electric Interruption or Electric Emergencies**

**1.800.743.1701** (24 hours a day, every day)

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**RG&E Natural Gas Emergencies or If You  
Smell Natural Gas**

**1.800.743.1702** (24 hours a day, every day)

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**RG&E Hearing and Speech-Impaired (TTY)**

**1.800.962.3293**

# *Other Important Numbers*

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## **Emergency**

**Dial 911** (if available)

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## **Local Police**

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## **Fire Department**

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## **Poison Control**

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## **Veterinarian**

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## **Doctors**

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## **Family/Neighbors**

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## **Radio Stations for News and Updates**

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**NYSEG**

**Reliable.** Essential.

**RGE** AND

*Always at Your Service*



**Energy East Companies**



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