

Hurricane Power Outage Checklist

Before the outage: protect people first, then plan essential loads.

readyhomesystems.com/hurricane-power-outage-checklist/

Last reviewed: August 21, 2026

Local evacuation orders, flood risk, fire, carbon monoxide alarms, structural damage, and urgent medical needs override every equipment task.

72-48 hours: people and plan

- ☐ Choose an evacuation destination, route, driver, pet plan, and backup contact.
- ☐ Save local alerts, emergency information, and the utility outage number.
- ☐ Confirm medication storage temperatures and pack doses, instructions, and a cooler plan.
- ☐ Confirm the exact backup method for each medical device with its supplier or clinician.
- ☐ List essential communications, lighting, refrigeration, pump, and medical-device loads.
- ☐ Plan an indoor battery path for compatible loads and a separate, professionally safe generator path. Never backfeed house wiring.

Sources: FEMA, FDA, CDC

24 hours: charge, cool, and stage

- ☐ Charge approved batteries, power stations, phones, radios, and medical-device backups according to their manuals.
- ☐ Test smoke and carbon monoxide alarms; stage flashlights and spare batteries.
- ☐ Place appliance thermometers and cool refrigerator/freezer within normal safe settings.
- ☐ Stage water, shelf-stable food, coolers, a radio, chargers, and a manual can opener.
- ☐ Prepare outdoor-rated cords, fuel, and a dry generator location only while conditions are safe.
- ☐ Finish early enough to evacuate. Do not work on live wiring or test equipment in heavy rain.

Sources: FEMA, CDC, USDA, FDA

Fill in before the storm

EVACUATION DESTINATION

EMERGENCY CONTACT

GENERATOR FUEL/RUNTIME NOTES

ESSENTIAL-LOAD WATTS

UTILITY OUTAGE NUMBER

MEDICAL-DEVICE CONTACT

BATTERY WATT-HOURS

PET TRANSPORT/CONTACT

Household notes and power sequence

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During and after: control carbon monoxide, food, and restoration risk.

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During the outage

- ☐ Keep generators outdoors at least 20 ft from every door, window, and vent, with exhaust pointed away from the home. [CDC]
- ☐ Never run a generator or other fuel-burning equipment in a garage, porch, shed, or partly enclosed space.
- ☐ Keep refrigerator and freezer doors closed; write down the outage start time.
- ☐ Use flashlights instead of candles. Keep cords, plugs, batteries, and equipment dry.
- ☐ Leave and call emergency services for carbon monoxide symptoms or alarms, fire, flooding, structural damage, or urgent medical needs.
- ☐ Follow utility and local official instructions; do not enter floodwater or touch damaged wiring.

Sources: CDC, FEMA

Food safety decision box

4 HOURS	48 HOURS	24 HOURS	40°F
refrigerator, unopened	full freezer, unopened	half-full freezer, unopened	or below for cold food

Keep doors closed. Discard food when time or temperature safety cannot be confirmed. Never taste food to decide whether it is safe. [USDA]

Safe restoration

- ☐ Wait for local clearance and inspect for water, heat, odor, damaged cords, or visible electrical damage before energizing equipment.
- ☐ Turn off or disconnect loads before power returns, then restore circuits gradually.
- ☐ Follow transfer-equipment, generator, battery, and appliance instructions exactly.
- ☐ Record maintenance, refueling, charging, food disposal, and replacement needs before storing equipment.

Sources: CDC, FEMA

After-action notes

OUTAGE START/END	REFRIGERATOR TEMPERATURE
FREEZER TEMPERATURE	EQUIPMENT ISSUES
SUPPLIES TO REPLACE	PLAN CHANGES FOR NEXT TIME

Official sources

NHC - Tropical Cyclone Climatology
FEMA - How to Prepare for a Hurricane
CDC - Protect Yourself During a Power Outage
USDA FSIS - Keeping Food Safe During an Emergency
FDA - Home Health and Consumer Devices

nhc.noaa.gov/climo/
[ready.gov hurricane guide](https://ready.gov/hurricane-guide)
cdc.gov/natural-disasters/
fsis.usda.gov/food-safety/
fda.gov/medical-devices/

General educational information only. This checklist does not replace evacuation orders, emergency services, medical-device instructions, manufacturer manuals, electrical code, or qualified professional advice. Source links do not imply agency endorsement.