



The power is out until tomorrow.

The first hour, in order. Most of the damage happens in the choices you make right now.

1 Confirm it is not just you



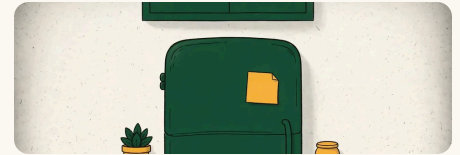
- Check the breaker panel first
- Look at the neighbors' porch lights
- Open the utility's outage map on your phone

2 Report it, then stop refreshing



- Report through the utility app or number
- Note the estimated restoration time
- Check once an hour, not every minute

3 Keep the fridge and freezer shut



- A closed fridge holds for about four hours
- A full freezer about two days, half full one
- Tape a note on the door so nobody forgets

4 Flashlights, not candles



- One light per room people are using
- Headlamps free up your hands
- Candles start house fires in outages every year

5 Unplug the expensive things



- TVs, computers, the garage door opener
- Power returning can surge
- Leave one lamp on so you know when it is back

6 Dim and ration the phones



- Low power mode, brightness down
- Text instead of calling
- Charge from the car if you have to, engine running outside

7 Generator rule, no exceptions



- Outdoors only, twenty feet from the house
- Never in a garage, even with the door open
- Carbon monoxide has no smell and kills in minutes

8 Check on the people who need it



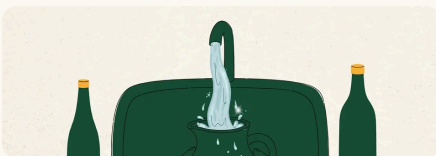
- Anyone on oxygen or powered medical equipment
- Older neighbors living alone
- Call the utility's medical baseline line if it applies

9 Hot or cold, manage the house



- Heat: close blinds, lowest floor, wet cloths
- Cold: one room, layers, close the doors
- Never run a grill or camp stove indoors

10 Water before you need it



- Fill pitchers and bottles while pressure holds
- A bathtub of water flushes toilets
- Pumped water systems can stop with the power

11 Eat the cold stuff first



- Fridge food first, then freezer, then pantry
- Anything above 40°F for two hours gets tossed
- When in doubt, throw it out

12 Settle in



- Pick one room, gather the lights there
- Board games beat the dark
- Set an alarm to check the status at midnight

Fridge shut, candles out, phone dimmed. The rest is patience.

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