

# Information Sheet for Extended Power Outage

## **SHELTER INFORMATION**

Homeowners should give strong consideration to temporarily living with family, friends or neighbors until power can be restored to their homes. Community shelters are also available and transportation to the shelters is available through your local community transit agency. If you decide to go to a community shelter, please consider the following important information:

- Bring a change of clothing for a few days time.
- Bring your necessary personal articles (i.e. toothbrush).
- Bring all necessary medications for several days time.
- Bring blankets or sleeping bags for each person.

The nearest community shelter in your community is located at the following location:

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## **PET INFORMATION**

For homeowners who need assistance caring for pets or would like to go to a community shelter but cannot take their pets with them should request assistance from your local emergency management staff who will work with you to ensure arrangements are made.

## **PROTECTION OF HOME FROM FREEZING PIPES**

To prevent water pipe freeze up and possible bursting in homes the following steps should be taken.

- Turn off the main water supply valve to the house (usually located where the water line enters the house).
- Find the lowest fixture such as a hand lavatory or laundry sink in basement or first floor if there is no basement.
- Open the hot and cold water faucet valves then go to fixtures such as a tub, lavatory, kitchen sink on upper levels and open the water control valves to introduce air into the plumbing. This will allow water to drain by gravity to the lowest level and come out the lowest open fixture.
- Power should be turned off to the hot water heater, turn off the electrical supply at the panel or shut off the gas valve at the water heater. You should then open the bottom drain valve on the water heater and drain it to a floor drain.

## **PROTECTION FROM POWER SURGE**

To reduce the chance of damage to delicate equipment (i.e. refrigeration compressors, computers) it is a good idea to turn off all the breakers at the main panel or pull the main fuses so the panel will not be energized when power is restored. This will protect electrical equipment from surges or fluctuations in current when the power comes back on.

## **SAFE HEATING OF HOME**

Be extremely careful when using wood stoves, fireplaces, or space heaters to reduce the risk of fire and prevent carbon monoxide poisoning. In addition to following the manufacturer's instructions, remember these safety tips:

- Use fireplace, wood stoves, or other combustion heaters only if they are properly vented to the outside and do not leak flue gas into the indoor air space.
- Do not burn paper in a fireplace.
- Do not place a space heater within 3 feet of anything that may catch on fire, such as drapes, furniture, or bedding, and never cover your space heater.
- Never leave children unattended near a space heater.
- Avoid using extension cords to plug in your space heater. If your space heater has a damaged electrical cord or produces sparks, do not use it.

- Protect yourself from carbon monoxide (CO) poisoning by installing a battery-operated CO detector and never using generators, fuel-fired space heaters, grills, camp stoves, or similar devices indoors.

## **PROTECTING YOUR HEALTH**

### ***Dress Appropriately***

If you must go outside, wear a hat, a scarf or knit mask to cover face and mouth, mittens, water-resistant coat and boots, and several layers of loose-fitting clothing. Outer layers should be tightly woven and wind resistant to reduce body-heat loss caused by wind. Wool, silk, or polypropylene inner layers of clothing will hold more body heat than cotton. Stay dry—wet clothing chills the body rapidly. Excess perspiration increases heat loss, so remove extra layers of clothing when you feel too warm. Do not ignore shivering. It's an important first sign that the body is losing heat. Persistent shivering is a signal to return indoors.

### ***Avoid Exertion***

Cold weather puts an extra strain on the heart. If you have heart disease or high blood pressure, follow your doctor's advice about shoveling snow or performing other hard work in the cold. Remember, your body is already working hard just to stay warm, so don't overdo it.

### ***Hypothermia***

Hypothermia is a serious medical condition that results from a sudden drop in body temperature. If you have any of the following symptoms, please seek medical attention immediately:

- shivering
- confusion
- slowed or labored movements
- slurred speech

### ***Frostbite***

Frostbite is an injury to the body that is caused by freezing. Frostbite causes a loss of feeling and color in affected areas. It most often affects the nose, ears, cheeks, chin, fingers, or toes. Frostbite can permanently damage the body, and severe cases can lead to amputation. The risk of frostbite is increased in people with reduced blood circulation and among people who are not dressed properly for extremely cold temperatures. At the first signs of redness or pain in any skin area, get out of the cold or protect any exposed skin—frostbite may be beginning. Any of the following signs may indicate frostbite:

- a white or grayish-yellow skin area
- skin that feels unusually firm or waxy
- numbness

A victim is often unaware of frostbite until someone else points it out because the frozen tissues are numb. If you detect symptoms of frostbite, seek medical care.

- Get into a warm room as soon as possible.
- Unless absolutely necessary, do not walk on frostbitten feet or toes—this increases the damage.
- Immerse the affected area in warm—not hot—water (the temperature should be comfortable to the touch for unaffected parts of the body).
- Or, warm the affected area using body heat. For example, the heat of an armpit can be used to warm frostbitten fingers.
- Do not rub the frostbitten area with snow or massage it at all. This can cause more damage.
- Don't use a heating pad, heat lamp, or the heat of a stove, fireplace, or radiator for warming. Affected areas are numb and can be easily burned.