

If the power goes out, be prepared!

We rely on electricity every day, at work and at home. Unfortunately, a power outage or power interruption can occur at any time and when we may least expect it. Regular electric service can be interrupted for a variety of reasons-- damage to power lines and equipment can be caused by storms, heavy winds, animal contact, or overloads on the system.

While most outages are momentary-- lasting only seconds or minutes-- a severe storm or other disaster situation could potentially keep the electric power off for days or weeks. It is important to plan ahead for the possibility of losing electric power.

Before the power goes out

- *Always keep a flashlight in a place where you can find it easily in the dark.* Better still, prepare an emergency kit that includes a working flashlight, extra batteries, wind-up clock, portable radio, manual can opener, and a blanket.
- *Keep nonperishable food items that require minimal cooking and preparation in your home,* as well as a supply of bottled water.
- *Remember that cordless phones won't work without electricity.* Have at least one corded phone in your house. This will allow you to make and receive emergency calls such as when the Town or Belmont Light need to alert residents via the reverse 911 system. If you have a fiber optic or VoIP landline, make sure to have battery back up for extended outages.
- *Protect your electronic equipment* from power interruptions, outages, or voltage instability caused by momentary power fluctuations or outages. Uninterruptible Power Supply (UPS) systems, surge protectors, and surge suppressors can help protect electronic equipment. These protection devices can be purchased locally.

If the power goes out

- If you are without power, check your main circuit breaker or fuse, if they are OK, please call us to report your outage. You may also want to check your neighborhood to see if others are without power. The more information you can provide us the better. However, If your neighbors' power is out, call Belmont Light at 617-993-2800 to report the outage. Don't assume that your neighbors have called us-- we'd rather hear from everyone, rather than no one! However, please call only once to keep the line open for other customers.
- Turn off the lights and electrical appliances, except for the refrigerator and freezer. Keep a single lamp on so that you'll know when the power is restored.
- If you must head outdoors, stay away from any fallen or sagging power lines. Call Belmont Light to report the line and make sure to give us your location.
- Use candles sparingly as a light source or any open flame as a heat source. Make sure your fireplace is safe to use and the flue is open.



- Keep the refrigerator door closed. A full refrigerator may keep food fresh for about four hours, and a full freezer may keep food frozen for up to two days. Many refrigerated foods must stay below 40° F to remain safe; frozen foods below 0° F. When in doubt, throw it out!
- Never use charcoal briquettes, gas, or propane indoors. Using them could lead to carbon monoxide poisoning and increased risk of fire.

If you or someone in your family rely on life support or life saving system

- If you use life support equipment, please let us know when you call to report an outage.
- Customers relying on electric life-support machines should have emergency power and know how to operate it.
- In some cases, this may mean purchasing a back-up power supply such as a generator or going to a health care facility that has back-up power.
- Make sure your system has an alarm to alert you if the power goes out.

If you have an electric generator

- Always run gasoline powered generators outdoors as they produce dangerous carbon monoxide.
- Always follow the manufacturer's instructions on the use of power generators, for your safety, and ours!
- Power generators should never be plugged directly into your home's main electrical panel. This could result in serious injury or death to Belmont Light personnel working to restore the power.
- Instead, connect the generator directly to the equipment you want to use during the outage or have a licensed electrician install a transfer switch.