

## What Can I Do?

- Most power outages will be over almost as soon as they begin, but some can last much longer, up to days or even weeks
- Power outages can be life threatening, especially during extremely hot or cold weather

### Preparing for a power outage:

- Make emergency light sources (flashlights, batteries, glow sticks) accessible and known to family members
- Install surge protectors to safeguard sensitive electronic equipment (computers, televisions & stereo systems)
- Camping equipment can be useful, like portable stoves and lamps. Any liquid fuels and propane should be stored in garage or shed, separated from the house
- Store emergency supplies in your home, make your own 72 Hour Emergency Kit
- Make sure you know how to shut off the gas, water and electric supplies at the source within your house
- Keep your cell phone or mobile device fully charged whenever possible
- Keep your car's gas tank more than half full



Check on your neighbours, especially the elderly, those with young children and others with health concerns.

### During the power outage:

- Turn off all major non-essential appliances
- Unplug sensitive electronic equipment
- If leaving your house during an outage, unplug all heat-producing appliances
- Turn off all lights except for one light inside and one outside, for notification when power returns
- Keep refrigerator and freezer doors closed to preserve food. The refrigerator will keep food cool for four to six hours, depending on the temperature of the kitchen
- Use sturdy candle holders, and never leave burning candles unattended. Battery operated lanterns are a much safer option for lighting a room
- Don't use the following inside your home: barbecues, gasoline engines, generators, fuel powered lanterns or camp grills, or gas ranges. Using these indoors can lead to a poisonous build-up of carbon monoxide gas in the house
- Avoid unnecessary travel, especially during storms
- Check on your neighbours and relatives

### After the power outage:

- Check food supplies in refrigerators, freezers and cupboards for signs of spoilage. If a freezer door has been kept closed, food should stay frozen 24-36 hours, depending on the temperature. When food begins to defrost (usually after two days), it should be cooked; otherwise it should be thrown out
- Keep a small bag of ice cubes in the freezer. If you return home after a period of absence and the ice has melted and refrozen, there is a chance that the food has spoiled. When in doubt, throw it out!
- Reset your clocks, automatic timers, and alarms
- Restock your emergency kit so the supplies will be there when needed again



**Pack the contents of your 72 Hour Emergency Kit in an easy-to-carry duffle bag or a suitcase on wheels. Store your kit in a place that is easy to reach, and ensure that everyone in your family knows where to find it. Keep a small emergency kit in your car.**

### Essentials:

- Food (non-perishable and easy-to-prepare items, enough for 3 days) and a manual can opener
- Bottled water (4 litres per person for each day)
- Medication(s)
- Flashlight + extra batteries
- Radio (crank or battery-run)
- First-aid kit— take a first aid/CPR course!
- Candles in sturdy containers and matches/lighter
- Hand sanitizer or moist towelettes
- Personal hygiene items (toothbrush, soap, etc.)
- Copies of important documents (identification, contact lists, prescriptions, insurance, etc.)
- Extra car keys and cash
- Whistle (to attract attention, if needed)
- Zip-lock bags (to keep things dry)
- Garbage bags

### Special Considerations:

- Items for babies & small children—diapers, formula, bottles, baby food, comfort items
- Prescription medication
- Medical supplies and equipment
- Pet food and supplies
- Any other items specific to your family's needs

**Check and refresh your kit twice a year—when the clocks shift to/from daylight savings time is a good time. Check all expiry dates and replace food and water with a fresh supply. Check batteries and replace as needed.**

**If your family is safe and self-sufficient in the first 72 hours, it frees up emergency workers to help others who may be injured or in danger.**

## Important Sources of Information:

If you have a computer or cell phone that still has battery power, use your time on the internet to find helpful information on these sites:

Power outage information by area -

• [www.hydroone.com/power-outages-and-safety](http://www.hydroone.com/power-outages-and-safety)

• [www.entegrus.com/outages](http://www.entegrus.com/outages)

• [www.londonhydro.com/site/#!/outages/outage\\_map](http://www.londonhydro.com/site/#!/outages/outage_map)

Weather information -

• [www.weather.gc.ca](http://www.weather.gc.ca)

Emergency preparedness tips -

• [www.getprepared.gc.ca](http://www.getprepared.gc.ca)

• [www.emergencymanagementontario.ca/english/beprepared/beprepared.html](http://www.emergencymanagementontario.ca/english/beprepared/beprepared.html)

Information on health concerns, food and water safety -

• [www.healthunit.com/emergency](http://www.healthunit.com/emergency)

Use a battery operated or crank radio, or the radio in your car, to listen to local news reports. Be safe, follow the directions of local authorities.

For emergency information on the situation, possible road or school closures, evacuation routes and reception centres, availability of gas and other supplies, please call 211 in any community emergency.



## What is a Reception Centre? A Warming/Cooling Centre?

In some serious emergency situations, a municipality may advise that residents be evacuated from their homes, especially if there is danger from explosion, fire, flood or toxic chemicals. While most evacuees choose to stay with family or go to hotels, a Reception Centre may be opened to offer safety, supplies, emergency food and lodging, and other services. All Middlesex municipalities have chosen one or two possible Reception Centres during the emergency planning process; typically, these facilities are community halls, arenas, or other appropriate buildings. The term Reception Centre implies a “group lodging” facility, which usually offers emergency food services, registration of evacuees, basic first aid, and temporary accommodation on sleeping mats or cots.

A Warming or Cooling Centre is a facility which may be opened when necessary, as a place for people to get warm or cool down when an Extreme Cold or Heat Alert has been issued, or when a power outage has caused the need for such local intervention. Typically, a Warming/Cooling Centre provides these services: basic beverages (water, coffee, tea), power to charge phones, access to emergency information and pamphlets. Usually, a Warming/Cooling Centre has set hours, such as 8 am to 8 pm; it is not open overnight.

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**Would you be interested in having a one hour presentation on emergency preparedness for your group, club, workplace or congregation?** Please contact: Bettina Weber, Community Emergency Management Coordinator (CEMC)  
E: [bweber@middlesex.ca](mailto:bweber@middlesex.ca) T: 519-319-4906



## How to Help Yourself During an Extended Power Outage



There have been a number of extended power outages across Middlesex County this year. We hope this brochure will be a guide for actions you can take now, to prepare for a future blackout or other emergency. Please, keep this brochure as a handy reference.