

Long-duration blackout

ACTION CHECKLIST

Plan around water, essential medical power, safe temperature, food and communications rather than a restoration estimate. Reserve battery power for necessities and use shelf-stable food when refrigeration fails. Keep all generators outdoors at least 20 feet from openings. Move early if essential care or safe shelter cannot be maintained.

[] List critical needs

Identify power-dependent care, temperature-sensitive medicines, water access and who cannot manage stairs or heat. Set priorities before using scarce batteries or fuel.

[] Measure what remains

Write down safe water, ready-to-eat meals, usable batteries and medicine quantities. Review the inventory daily rather than guessing.

[] Keep fuel use safe

Never run generators, charcoal or camping stoves indoors, in a garage or on an enclosed balcony. Do not backfeed house wiring.

[] Protect food and hygiene

Keep cold appliances closed and use food-safety time and temperature guidance. Separate drinking water from washing and waste arrangements.

[] Set a relocation trigger

Choose the point when medical support, water or temperature can no longer be maintained. Confirm a reachable destination before those needs become urgent.

WATCH FOR

An announced restoration time is an estimate. Carbon monoxide, unsafe improvised wiring, dehydration and dangerous temperatures can be more urgent than the outage itself.

IF HELP IS UNAVAILABLE

Build a daily plan from current supplies and reachable shelter options. Do not wait for a food distribution, public generator or rescue transport that has not been confirmed.

Updated 2026-10-02 | Civilian educational guidance. Seek qualified help when reachable and safe; do not delay immediate protective action.

Full guide: <https://ospreyzero.com/emergencies/long-blackout/>

CDC · Protect yourself during a power outage

CDC · Avoid carbon monoxide poisoning