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**Power outage Tips**

**from Hood River County Sheriff’s Office of Emergency Management**

**and Hood River County Public Health**

Power failure is only one potential problem that may occur living in a rural area. Wildfire, landslide or an earthquake may leave one in need of a few days to a few weeks’ worth of emergency supplies. You may need to be self-sufficient for longer, but three days is a good starting point.

If you camp or travel, start with your travel kit as a starter kit. Keep a large Go-Kit in an easy-to-reach place (like a shed near the front door) and a small Go-Kit in your car.

**Electronics:**

* Keep your cell phone charged and keep a backup battery (pocket charger.) Make sure you have the right charging cables from the charger to your phone. Turn off automatic updates and non-essential notifications, close all non-essential apps, and keep your phone turned off or put in low power mode.
* Text may work when phone calls might not – when cell services are overwhelmed, which is common in emergencies.
* Sign up for **Hood River County Emergency Alerts** – the one site in our County for all 911, Sheriff’s, Police and Fire agency updates sent directly to you – but you have to opt-in, to your cell phone number or email:

<https://www.hoodriversheriff.com/events/emergency-alerts>

From this page - click on: *TO REGISTER CLICK HERE*

* Get a small AM/FM battery-operated radio or one you can crank by hand. Or a VHF/UHF radio may work if a cell phone does not.
* If you don’t have a battery operated radio- get into your car and listen to the radio for updates.
* A headlamp and flashlights with extra batteries are important.

**Backup Power**

* + Keep a supply of batteries to power the radio and headlamp
  + A power pack for your cell phone can be small, enough for one charge, or larger, which will give you 2-3 full charges.
  + A solar charger is useful but doesn’t work as well on cloudy days or if the panel is small.
  + A dynamo (hand crank) charger can also be used.
  + A gas or diesel generator is ideal for long term use, but make sure you store spare fuel and is directly connected to units you are powering. Be extremely careful about generator use with building power. Don’t bring a generator inside and watch out for smoke inhalation.

**Medications and medical devices**

* Make sure you always have at least a week supply of all medications since during a power failure, pharmacies may not be able to refill your medications.
* For devices such as CPAP machines and oxygen condensers, keep a backup battery or a backup device. Most oxygen companies will provide bottled oxygen to use in the event of a power failure.

**Car**

* + Keep your gas tank full—a good rule is to never let it drop below a half-tank.
  + Keep a small emergency kit in your car in case you are away from home during a power failure or stuck on the road. This might include a sleeping bag, non-perishable food, water, spare shoes, warm clothing, blankets and flashlights or head lamps (at all times of year).

**Water**

* For emergencies, a gallon of water per person per say should suffice. For a family of two, two 2.5 gallons jugs should suffice. You may need more in hot weather or for physical activity.
* Remember your hot water tank will be full of potable water.
* Consider backup water purification. Chlorine dioxide tablets are inexpensive. A UV light pen is also a great alternative. There are mobile water filter products available for use in camping or emergencies that are effective.

**Food**

* Three days non-perishable food can be canned goods, pouches, tins or dry storage. Keep rotating these through your regular meals so they don’t expire. Some ideas include canned seafood, dried meat, powdered milk, pouches of precooked meals, granola bars, canned beans and vegetables, and soups.
* A small propane or isobutane stove such as used for camping can be use for cooking, but not a huge priority.
* If you have an outdoor barbeque, keep the propane tank filled and consider a spare tank. Do not bring the BBQ indoors.

**Toileting**

* + Although toilets work without electricity, it still might be a good idea to conserve water.
  + Keep some baby wipes and alcohol gel available for cleaning hands.

**House**

* In the event of a power failure, keep your fridge closed as much as possible, keep shades drawn and use blankets or sheets to cover windows in direct sun.
* If you have natural gas for heat/cooking, this may be problematic in a power failure because they may have electronic lighters.
* Year ‘round, keep flashlights and lanterns in easy-to-grab places, like near the front door, under the sink, and one in every room.
* Candles come in handy but can be a fire hazard.

**Other**

* Keep some cash on hand, since credit cards may not work for gasoline or groceries.

**About overheating**

* Stay inside, stay hydrated, and avoid excessive physical activity.
* Watch out for pets and livestock – in hot weather, with fur, they are particularly susceptible to heat