

# Power Outage Safety Tips

The Massachusetts Emergency Management Agency (MEMA) has the following tips for dealing with a possible power outage:

- Check flashlights and portable radios to ensure that they are working, and you have extra batteries. A radio is an important source of critical weather and emergency information during a storm.
- If your water supply could be affected by a power outage (a well-water pump system), fill your bathtub and spare containers with water. Water in the bathtub should be used for sanitation purposes only, not as drinking water. Pouring a pail of water from the tub directly into the bowl can flush a toilet.
- Set your refrigerator and freezer to their coldest settings (remember to reset them back to normal once power is restored). During an outage, do not open the refrigerator or freezer door unnecessarily. Food can stay cold in a full refrigerator for up to 24 hours, and in a well-packed freezer for 48 hours (24 hours if it is half-packed).
- If you have medication that requires refrigeration, check with your pharmacist for guidance on proper storage during an extended outage.
- In order to protect against possible voltage irregularities that can occur when power is restored, you should unplug all sensitive electronic equipment, including TVs, stereo, VCR, microwave oven, computer, cordless telephone, answering machine and garage door opener. Review the process for manually operating an electric garage door.
- Be extra cautious when you go outside to inspect for damage after a storm. Downed or hanging electrical wires can be hidden by trees or debris, and could be live. Never attempt to touch or move downed lines, and keep children and pets away from them. Do not touch anything power lines are touching, such as tree branches or fences. Always assume a downed line is a live line. Call your utility company to report any outage-related problem.