



STATE OF OHIO
Emergency Operations Center
NEWS RELEASE
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John R. Kasich, Governor

Emergency Management Agency
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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Power Outages, Rising Temperatures Cause Safety Concerns

One Million Ohio Homes and Businesses Without Power

COLUMBUS – With approximately one million Ohio homes and businesses temporarily without electricity, there are growing concerns of food, water and generator safety from Ohio Emergency Management Agency, Ohio Department of Health and Ohio Department of Agriculture. Refrigerators and freezers can keep food cool and safe for a limited amount of time without a power source. However, spoiled food can pose a health risk.

Food from the refrigerator should be thrown out if the power is out more than four hours. Never taste food to determine its safety; appearance and odor are not indicators of food safety. Keep the door closed as much as possible.

If the power is out for longer than two hours, follow the guidelines below:

- Discard any perishable food (such as meat, poultry, fish, eggs, and leftovers) that have been above 40 °F for over 2 hours.
- For the refrigerator: Pack milk, other dairy products, meat, fish, eggs, gravy, and spoilable leftovers into a cooler surrounded by ice. Inexpensive Styrofoam coolers are fine for this purpose.
- A freezer that is half full will hold food safely for up to 24 hours. A full freezer will hold food safely for 48 hours. Do not open the freezer door if you can avoid it.

For more information, see [Keeping Food and Water Safe after a Natural Disaster or Power Outage](#) and [Preventing Illness after a Natural Disaster](#) on CDC's website.

Water Safety

Electrical power outages may affect the operation of your private home water or sewage treatment system. Learn what to do if you have a [private water system](#) or [sewage treatment system](#).

Generator Safety

While a generator can provide an alternative source of power when the electricity goes out, it can also become a dangerous source of carbon monoxide.

Carbon monoxide, or CO, is an odorless, colorless gas that can cause sudden illness and death. A single gas-powered generator can produce as much as 100 times more poisonous Carbon Monoxide gas than a car's exhaust.

- Never use a generator inside your home, basement or garage.
- Operate generators outdoors as far away from your house as possible. The National Institute of Standards and Technology reports that even 15 feet away may still be dangerous because the CO fumes can enter the home through windows, doors or vents. Tests are still being conducted to find a safe operating distance.
- Never refuel a generator while it is running or hot.
- Install CO detectors inside the home near all the sleeping areas.
- Never use a charcoal grill or a barbecue grill indoors. Using a grill indoors will cause a build up of CO inside your home, cabin, or camper unless you use it inside a vented fireplace.
- Never burn charcoal indoors. Burning charcoal — red, gray, black, or white — gives off CO.
- Never use a portable gas camp stove indoors. Using a gas camp stove indoors can cause CO to build up inside your home, cabin, or camper.

Chronology

- June 30: Governor John R. Kasich declared a state of emergency for the entire state of Ohio which authorizes state agencies to take any necessary actions to assist local government response and recovery efforts.
- June 30: Kasich directed Ohio Emergency Management Agency Executive Director Nancy Dragani to open the state's Emergency Operations Center in Columbus to coordinate state and local resources. The state contacted Federal Emergency Management Agency officials to let them know federal assistance may be needed.
- June 29: Severe storms and high winds during evening rush hour knocked out power for approximately one million homes and businesses across two-thirds of the state.

For those residents without power, please call your local 211 for information and where to turn if you need help. Call 911 in an emergency. Information is also available online at www.ema.ohio.gov. Follow along on Twitter with #OHwx and #severeweather.

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