

# Helpful advice during a power cut



**SP ENERGY  
NETWORKS**

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# What to do during an unexpected power cut

First of all, check:

- Have your neighbours lost their supply?
- Are the streetlights out?

If not, the problem could be with your electrical installation.

- Check your trip switch, if you have one.
- If it has operated, switch off all your appliances and reset the switch.

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## What happens when I call?

When you call we may require some information from you such as your name, postcode and house number. If we know of an interruption and have enough information to deal with the situation, you may be connected to our voice messaging system. The recorded message will be targeted to a specific geographical area and will give information about the interruption including the expected time of restoration wherever possible.



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## Safety – fallen power lines

If you see electrical cables on or near the ground, please keep clear of them. They could be live and able to conduct electricity through damp ground or metallic objects.

If they are in a public place, dial 999, tell the police and help keep passers-by well away until they arrive.

**Please call us urgently if you see any of the following, and we'll make the equipment safe:**

- Damaged equipment or lines.
- Overhead lines on the ground or low enough for people or vehicles to come into contact with them.
- Sparking overhead wires twisted or pushed together by broken tree branches.
- Broken substation fences or damaged electricity manhole covers which leave live equipment exposed.
- Electricity meters and associated equipment that are not secure or waterproof.

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## Need a little extra help?

If electricity is crucial to your health (for instance if you use medical equipment at home) ask to be included on our Priority Services Register. You can do this via our website, by phone or email:

 [www.spenergynetworks.co.uk/  
priorityservices](http://www.spenergynetworks.co.uk/priorityservices)

 0330 10 10 444

 [customercare@spenergynetworks.com](mailto:customercare@spenergynetworks.com)

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## Medical equipment

If you use electrically-powered medical equipment at home, ensure you have plans in place for long power interruptions. Ensure your equipment has a battery backup.

If you have a mains operated stair lift, check if there is a manual release handle to return the stair lift safely to ground level. Many stair lifts have battery backup. If yours does not, it may be possible to have one fitted.

**For serious health problems, call NHS 24 on 111. In an emergency call 999.**

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## Being prepared

- Keep the emergency number handy – near the phone or stored on your mobile. We're here for you 24 hours a day.
- If you need a little extra help, contact us about joining our Priority Services Register.
- Keep a torch with charged batteries in a handy place.
- Remember that many modern home phones may not work, keep a mobile or traditional (analogue) telephone handy.
- Keep a battery powered radio, as you may be able to receive updates on the incident.
- Know how to use the manual option on electrical garage doors and gates.

- Try to keep your vehicle's fuel tank at least half-full – service stations may not be able to pump fuel.
  - Generators – If you have a generator, be sure that it's installed safely if not, you risk damaging your property and endangering lives.
  - Try to keep mobiles and laptops fully charged.
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## Helpful advice during a power cut

- Unplug sensitive appliances such as TVs, satellite equipment and computers.
- Switch off and unplug appliances especially items such as fires, cookers, irons and hair straighteners in case you forget they're on when power is restored.
- Leave a light switched on so you know when power is restored.
- Avoid opening your fridge or freezer more than necessary.
- Check on elderly or vulnerable neighbours to ensure they are safe and comfortable.
- Street lighting may also be off so take care outside.
- During cold weather, dress warmly using several layers of clothing.
- Many central heating systems and water heaters will not work. Portable heaters are a good alternative but take care where you put them.
- Limit the use of your laptop or smart phone to save battery power.
- When power is restored turn your appliances back on one at a time.

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## Looking after your pets

Most pets will not be affected by a power interruption. For specific advice about unusual or exotic animals, contact your local pet shop, supplier or the RSPCA.

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### Tropical fish

If the power is only off for a short length of time, most tropical fish will be unaffected. Longer power interruptions may be problematic as mains-operated air pumps, filters and heaters won't work while the electricity is off.

Fish suppliers recommend having a cheap bubble up filter that can be run off a battery powered air pump for use during a power interruption. Battery powered heaters are also available from pet shops.

If battery powered equipment is not available to you:

- Disturb the water surface for 5 minutes each hour by filling a jug with tank water and pouring it back in.
- For insulation, wrap the tank in blankets and/or fill hot water bottles with warm water and place them around the outside of the tank.

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## Livestock

If your electricity supply is interrupted, ventilation, heat, light and food supply could be compromised.

You may wish to consider:

- A generator to provide an alternative source of power.
- A contingency plan, and enough feed in stock, for manual feeding if you ordinarily rely on automatic feeding.
- A battery powered unit to provide power to any essential electrical fencing.

If you do not have a generator available:

- Use automatic drop-out flaps in the building to provide natural ventilation. Increase air circulation by fully opening ventilation flaps and doors.
- In cold weather, provide extra insulation and straw for bedding, especially for young animals. Consider moving any animals you feel are especially at risk to temporary accommodation with bottled gas heating.

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# Get in touch

If your trip switch has not operated, and you can find no other reason for the power cut please don't assume that we know. Let us know by contacting us on the emergency numbers below;

## Central & Southern Scotland

 **0800 092 9290 / 0330 10 10 222**

## Cheshire, Merseyside, North Wales or North Shropshire

 **0800 001 5400 / 0330 10 10 400**

It's a good idea to take a note of the relevant number and keep it near your telephone or save it into your mobile phone.

You can also find out about any current activity in your area by checking the post code look up page on our website –

 **[www.spenergynetworks.co.uk/  
pages/postcode\\_lookup.asp](http://www.spenergynetworks.co.uk/pages/postcode_lookup.asp)**

This leaflet is also available in Welsh. Should you require a copy, please call 0330 10 10 444 or visit [spenergynetworks.co.uk](http://spenergynetworks.co.uk)

**POWER CUT?  
CALL 105**



Calls to 03 numbers cost no more than a national rate call to an 01 or 02 number and must count towards any inclusive minutes in the same way as 01 and 02 calls. These rules apply to calls from any type of line including mobile, BT, other fixed line or payphone.