

Shelter, Heat & Cold

Staying safe at home without power, and outdoors without shelter.

Staying warm without power

- Live in one small room. Close other doors. Choose a room with few windows, on the sunny side if possible.
- Cover windows with blankets, cardboard or plastic sheeting. Block draughts under doors.
- Wear several loose layers, a hat, gloves and dry socks. Change out of wet clothes quickly.
- Sleep off the floor or on insulation (cardboard, foam, blankets). Share a bed or room to share body heat.
- Eat regularly and drink warm drinks. Your body needs fuel to stay warm.
- Fill bottles with hot water to warm beds. Check elderly people, babies and sick people often.

Carbon monoxide: the silent killer

DANGER Never use generators, barbecues, charcoal, camping stoves or gas ovens to heat a room, and never inside a house, tent, garage or vehicle. Keep generators at least 6 metres from doors and windows.

Signs: headache, dizziness, weakness, nausea, confusion, sleepiness, often several people at once. Get everyone into fresh air immediately and get medical help.

WARNING Candles cause many fires. Never leave them burning unattended or near curtains and bedding. Use torches where possible.

Staying cool in extreme heat

- ☐ Drink water regularly, even if not thirsty
- ☐ Stay indoors in the coolest room during the hottest hours
- ☐ Close curtains on the sunny side; open windows at night
- ☐ Use wet cloths and cool showers
- ☐ Wear loose, light-coloured clothing and a hat outdoors
- ☐ Check elderly people, babies and sick people twice a day
- ☐ Never leave children or animals in a parked vehicle

Heat stroke is an emergency. See the First Aid pack.

Outdoors without shelter

1. Get out of the wind and rain: behind a wall, rock, vehicle or dense trees.
2. Insulate yourself from the ground. The ground takes heat fastest. Use branches, leaves, cardboard or bags.
3. Make a small shelter: a sheet or tarp over a rope or branch, sides weighed down. Small spaces stay warmer.
4. Stay dry. Avoid valleys and riverbeds (cold air and flash floods) and hilltops (wind, lightning).



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Sources:

- CDC: Carbon Monoxide Poisoning Prevention
- CDC: Heat-related illness; Winter weather safety
- Ready.gov / FEMA: Build a Kit, Make a Plan (ready.gov)

Important: General information only. Not a substitute for trained medical help or official instructions. Always follow local authorities and emergency services.

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