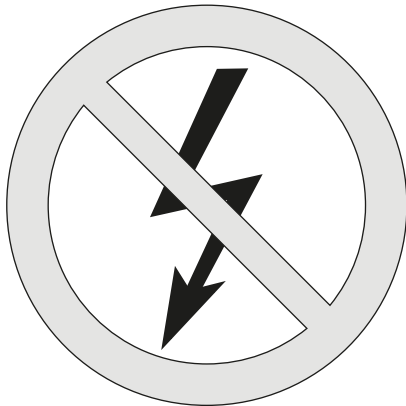




Power cuts – How to prepare and respond

Information for citizens



What would you do if you suddenly had no electricity?

In this part of the world, industry and the population are accustomed to a stable power supply and can rely on the constant availability of electricity. Supply disturbances are extremely rare, usually confined to a small local region, and generally rectified within a few hours. But in emergency situations, it may take several days to restore electricity. Severe flooding is just one example. For this reason, it is important and in your own personal interest to be prepared – both in your mind and practically.

Some of the questions to be asked

How dependent is my home on electricity, gas, oil or district heating? And what will happen if such energy supplies suddenly fail? No lighting once the sun goes down. No heating in the winter and no warm water for the shower. The telephone is dead and there is no way to recharge the battery of a mobile phone. Access to information via Internet, television or radio is lost. Cold food instead of warm meals. Freezers gradually defrost and refrigerators no longer function. Just these few examples illustrate the restrictions which private households could face.

On top of all this, we must not forget the challenges for the health system and the disturbances to be expected in many other areas of life in the city, for example public transport, business, banking and indeed the overall supply situation, depending on the extent and duration of a power cut.

Be prepared

If you are properly prepared, you are less dependent on others and will find it easier to bridge the duration of a power cut. It is useful to keep a carefully thought-out stock of the most important provisions, along with a corresponding assortment of outdoor or camping equipment. Consider especially the following items:

- Food and drinking water sufficient for several days
- Similarly, baby food and toiletries

- Medicines and first aid kit
- Lighting: Candles and matches, lighter, torch and batteries or else a wind-up torch, possibly a head torch, petroleum lamp with petroleum, camping gas bottle with lantern attachment, solar-powered and LED lights
- Communication: Battery-powered radio, telephone and computer with corresponding batteries; charge the batteries regularly to ensure that they are ready to use; remember spare batteries and possibly a solar battery charger
- Heating: Camping gas bottle with heater attachment, woollen blankets, warming pads for hands and feet, possibly hot water bottles; if you have a fireplace or stove heating, remember a corresponding stock of coal, briquettes, wood or pellets
- Cooking: Manual can opener, gas camping stove, spirit or liquid fuel stove, solid-fuel stove with fuel tablets; if you have a barbecue or table-top grill using gas or charcoal, never use it indoors, as there is a serious risk of suffocation
- Sufficient cash reserves, as the cash machines at banks may not be functioning
- Sufficient fuel reserves, as petrol stations may be closed or rationing supplies
- If you possess an emergency generator, remember a corresponding supply of diesel or petrol.

Persönliche Checkliste anlegen

- Drinking water, food
- Medicines, toiletries
- Power cut provisions
- Fire safety precautions
- Radio, batteries
- Emergency pack, documents

Respond correctly in case of a power cut

In the suddenly arising situation of a power cut, it is important to stay calm and collected and to act prudently.

- Initially, remain where you are and avoid unnecessary journeys.
- Do not use lifts.
- Immediately switch off any electrical appliances which could pose a fire hazard when the power supply is restored, e.g. electric iron or cooker.
- If it is dark, provide for alternative lighting and thus safety as you move around in the house or apartment, preferably with a hand-held or head torch. This will help to prevent accidents.

- Light a camping lantern or candles at suitable and necessary points in the house or apartment. Ensure that they are placed only on non-flammable surfaces. Pay attention to the risk of fire in the direct surroundings and especially when leaving the room.
- If the heating is no longer functioning, keep warm with extra clothing, warm shoes and a hat. Do not wait until you already feel the cold. If necessary, wrap yourself in blankets.
- Save the remaining battery capacity of your mobile phone and only make the most important calls.
- Do not call the emergency telephone numbers except in case of life-threatening emergencies or accidents. Experience shows that the call networks may otherwise become overloaded.
- Check whether you can stay temporarily with relatives or friends who are not affected.
- Use a battery-powered radio or the car radio as a source of local information if no other radio or television is functioning.
- Agree with your neighbours on who will call the public utility helpline to report a power fault and keep each other informed.
- Help and look after children, elderly citizens and others in need of assistance in your immediate neighbourhood, and do not be afraid to tell others you need assistance in an emergency.
- Keep refrigerators and freezers closed as far as possible. Only open the doors when absolutely necessary.
- When stocking food, choose products with a long life, e.g. canned foods, preserves in glass jars, long-life or condensed milk. Use camping equipment as an alternative method of cooking, but then only outdoors.
- Only use private motor vehicles in an emergency and arrange carpools wherever possible. Avoid unnecessary journeys in order to save fuel.

Call the helplines of the public utility companies

Electricity	Telephone (03 51) 50 17 88 81
Gas	Telephone (03 51) 50 17 88 80
District heating	Telephone (03 51) 50 17 88 84

Emergency telephone numbers

The emergency telephone numbers of the police, fire brigade and rescue services are reserved exclusively for the reporting of life-threatening emergencies, accidents and fires.

Police	Telephone 110
Fire and rescue services	Telephone 112

What do I do if I need help during a longer power cut?

If proper functioning of the telephone system is disturbed for a longer period due to a power cut, which would also mean that no emergency calls can be made, a network of local emergency contact centres will be set up across the city. You can turn to these centres for information and assistance. In case of an emergency incident, the City of Dresden will use the radio and, if possible, its website to inform citizens on the precise locations of the centres and the forms of assistance they provide.

Pay attention to the siren warning system

Pay attention to the announcements made via the city siren warning system. These announcements provide important information on how to react in case of an emergency, especially where the telephone networks are overloaded or out of service.

Follow the instructions of the emergency services

Follow all instructions given by the police, fire brigade, rescue service and authorities.

Further information

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www.bbk.bund.de

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