

At Hydro, we do our best to make sure you always have power at the flick of a switch, but at times, due to our ever changing weather conditions, like extreme cold, blizzards or high winds, we are unable to guarantee uninterrupted service. Most power outages last for just a few moments. In extreme cases, outages can last for more than a day.

THERE ARE MANY CAUSES OF UNPLANNED POWER OUTAGES:

- Ice storms, extreme cold, high winds or blizzards.
- Salt contamination: Salt in the air in coastal areas builds on insulators and equipment causing power outages. This issue is resolved naturally by rainfall cleaning off the insulators or Hydro crews may clean it off manually.
- Something may fall on a power line by natural causes (e.g. high winds can cause a tree to fall onto a line).
- Line contacts by contractors and members of the public: Contact with power lines it can result in a power outage. For contractors, line contacts most often occur when using heavy equipment and machinery (such as excavators, boom trucks, dump trucks). Line contacts by members of the general public most often occur when cutting or trimming trees too close to power lines. It is very dangerous to come into contact with power lines, and it can cause serious injury or death. Hydro cautions all members of the public to work safely near power lines.
- If a piece of power line infrastructure breaks or something falls on the power line, the line will trip as a safety precaution and cause a power outage.



An example of an ice storm.



An example of a line contact.

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THERE ARE SOME CIRCUMSTANCES THAT MAY CAUSE AN EXTENDED POWER OUTAGE (MORE THAN FOUR TO FIVE HOURS):

- Extreme weather: There are times when crews cannot travel immediately to the location because of severe weather conditions (roads washed out, remote locations, ferries not crossing, or planes grounded). For example, crews often travel by plane to coastal communities to respond to some outages and it may take the crew several hours to respond.
- Mandatory rest times: For safety reasons, crews are only permitted to work for a certain period of time, at which time they take a mandatory rest period to ensure they are alert and focused on the job to reduce the risk of injury.

BE PREPARED FOR OUTAGES AND EMERGENCIES

- Prepare an emergency kit with enough supplies to sustain your family for up to 72 hours. Your kit should include: flashlight, batteries, candles and matches; battery powered or wind up radio; first aid kit; warm clothes and blankets; cash in small bills; safety gloves; small fuel stove and the proper fuel.
- Don't use camp stoves or barbecues indoors as they produce hazardous fumes.
- Do not plug a portable generator into the wiring system of a home or building. This action could result in serious injury to utility workers. Plug individual appliances directly into the portable generator.
- Install surge protectors or other power protection devices to protect your computers, DVD players, televisions, etc.

IF A POWER OUTAGE OCCURS:

- Determine if the outage is limited to your home, or if the outage has affected your entire neighbourhood.
- If limited to your home, check the circuit breaker panel or fuse box. If required, replace fuses with the same size only, or reset breakers.
- If the power is out in your neighbourhood, call Hydro's Power Outage and Emergency Service at 1-888-764-9376 (1-888-76-HYDRO) to receive outage information, or to report an outage, downed wires, trees or broken poles.
- Never go near or touch a fallen power line, treat it as though it is live.
- Turn off electrical appliances especially stoves which may pose a hazard if power is restored while people are sleeping or out of the house.
- Don't turn off your refrigerator or freezer. Keep the doors of your refrigerator and freezer closed to keep your food as fresh as possible.
- Turn thermostats to the lowest setting or switch them off; and keep only one light on to let you know when power has been restored.

WHEN POWER IS RESTORED:

- Turn on the most essential equipment first. Wait 10 to 15 minutes before turning up thermostats and reconnecting appliances, to give the electricity system a chance to stabilize.
- Make sure your refrigerator and freezer are back on. Check all frozen foods to determine the extent of thawing. Check carefully for signs of spoilage. If in doubt, throw it out!
- If flooding occurred, have an electrician check your electricity system before turning the power back on.
- Turn off standby equipment. Reset clocks, automatic timers and alarms.
- Restock any emergency supplies used during the outage.

For more information, please visit the Public Safety Canada Website at www.getprepared.ca.

