A PREPPER'S GUIDE TO A LONG-TERM BLACKOUT

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Three steps to prepare for a long-term blackout
(Source: Swedish Energy Agency, American Red Cross)

1 PREPARE

What can you do now?

Water
- Store containers of water – plan for 3.5 litres per person per day.
- Put ¾ full plastic bottles in the freezer. These can act as coolers during an outage or can be drunk or used for washing.

Heat
- Stock extra fuel for stove or spare heater.
- Consider backup power for circulation pump.

Light
- Store candles, matches, flashlights and batteries.

Food
- Keep enough tinned and dried food to consume after perishables run out.
- Get a cooler.
- Keep a camping stove with fuel.

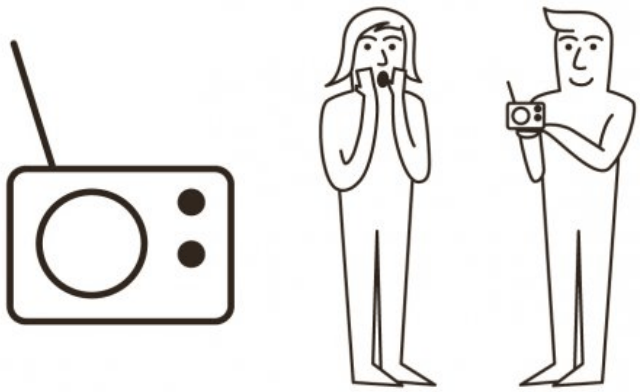
Hygiene
- Store toilet paper, wet wipes, grocery plastic bags and other hygiene articles you may need.

Medication
- Keep a stock of personal medication – enough for 2 weeks.
- Make sure you have a first aid kit.

Car
- Keep your car's fuel tank full.

Social
- Get to know your neighbours – maybe you can help each other during an outage.
- Keep a battery-powered or hand-cranked radio.

2 RESPOND



WHEN THE POWER GOES OUT

Run down this checklist of things to do:

- Fill up buckets, water containers and bathtubs with water.
- Turn off and unplug electrical equipment. Keep one light switched on to tell you when power has been restored.
- Listen to the radio.
- Be cautious of fire hazards if you burn anything – this includes candles. Ventilate quickly and often to avoid carbon monoxide poisoning.
- Communicate with neighbours.
- Check if any elderly or disabled people need help.
- Eat food from refrigerator first, then freezer.
- Prepare cooler with ice to preserve perishable food longer.
- Avoid any unneccessary travel.
- Use plastic bags in toilet and dispose of them in a designated place.
- If it is below zero, be sure to check and isolate pipelines. Open taps. Empty water systems and radiators. Put alcohol in gutters and sink traps.
- Keep warm by picking south-facing room to stay in. Isolate windows with curtains or blankets. Gather people and stay close. Build a little cave by draping blankets over a table.

3 RECOVER

WHEN THE LIGHTS COME BACK ON

- Check food. Throw away anything that has an unusual odour or colour. If in doubt, chuck it.
- Check what electrical appliances are switched on and whether water taps are open.