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Media Contact: APS Media Hotline (602) 250-2277

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WHAT TO DO IF THE POWER GOES OFF

APS Offers Tips to Stay Prepared

Summer storms can temporarily interrupt electric service to your home. Preparing yourself and your home will help you weather Arizona's Monsoon season safely and with minimum discomfort. In the event of an outage, APS offers the following:

Be prepared

Keep a battery-operated radio handy. During major outages, the media will announce when power will be restored. Maintain battery-powered flashlights or lanterns on hand so that you can easily find them in the dark. Make sure all family members know where the flashlights are located. And, stock up on extra batteries. Lastly, ensure you have at least one telephone in the house that is not cordless since cordless phones need electricity to function.

If you choose to use candles for lighting be sure to use extra precaution due to the risk of fire. Do not use candles near flammable materials or where they can be knocked over or reached by small children or family pets.

If you have an electrically operated garage door opener, be sure to familiarize yourself with the owner's manual so you will be able to release the door when the power is off. If you don't have a manual, you may be able to obtain information by calling a contractor who installs your brand of door opener.

Reporting a power outage

You can report a power outage and get outage status information through APS' automated phone system. When you call, you should be prepared to give your APS account number and phone number.

If your power is still off when you are ready for bed, you can also request a wake-up call via the automated phone system. When your call is answered, press 1 + 1; then follow the system's instructions.

To report an outage, call (602) 371-7171 (Metro Phoenix area) or 1-800-253-9405 (other areas).

Taking precautions around the house

During any power interruption, immediately turn off or disconnect all major appliances such as air conditioners, dryers, washers, dishwashers, ranges and heavy-duty motors such as pool pumps and water heaters.

Otherwise, when the electricity comes back on, the sudden surge of power caused by the high demand for electricity could complicate and delay power restoration efforts.

A second outage is more likely if customers don't turn off their major appliances when an outage occurs.

Don't turn off your freezer or refrigerator because you might forget to turn them back on when the power is restored. Food will stay frozen for 12 to 24 hours. But keep the freezer and refrigerator doors closed.

Leave on a few lights so you'll know when the power is restored. Wait at least one minute after the power is restored before turning your equipment back on. If you leave your home during the outage, double-check to make sure all heat producing appliances, such as your range and iron, are unplugged. This will minimize fire danger if power is restored while you are away.

Preparing meals

- Preparing meals during an outage can be difficult; here are some tips that can help you feed your family safely.
- Camp stoves, wood, coal, propane, kerosene or oil stoves should only be used outdoors.
- Do not use charcoal briquettes as a fuel source indoors because they emit a large quantity of poisonous carbon monoxide.
- Maintain a dependable supply of nonperishable foods that don't have to be refrigerated.
- Remember to have a manual can opener on hand.
- Stock up on canned and dried foods for a quick and easy meal.
- Cereals, breads, dried and canned meats or fruits, powdered or canned milk, crackers, nuts, trail mix and peanut butter are some "no cook" possibilities.
- Meal-in-a-can foods, stews, soups, beans and vegetables require little heat for cooking.
- Use a Thermos to keep liquids hot for an extended period of time.

Storing food

Food will stay frozen about two days in a full freezer, if only half full, about one day.

Keep the freezer door closed. Every time you open the freezer door, you let in warm air that will speed thawing. If it is a prolonged outage, you may want to use dry ice to keep food frozen and cover the freezer with blankets or quilts.

Wear gloves when handling dry ice and place it on cardboard in the freezer to protect the food.

Remember that pork, poultry, fish and hamburger spoil quickly at temperatures above 40 degrees. Other quick spoiling foods include custards, creamed foods, or any foods containing mayonnaise. Cooked meats and cured meats will keep for several days.

Special medical needs

Because our customers' safety is a top priority at APS, we have developed the APS Medical Care Program, designed to identify those customers with special medical needs that could be jeopardized by an interruption of electrical service, such as customers on life-support systems. If you or someone living in your home is on life-support medical equipment that is electrically operated, please let us know today, so we can send you information, which can prepare you for a possible outage.

In the metro Phoenix area, you can reach a Medical Care Representative by calling (602) 371-6884 or 1-800-253-9405, ext. 6884. Elsewhere in the state, please call your local APS office.

APS recommends that if you use life-support equipment, you should seek temporary shelter where you can be assured your medical needs will be met until the power is restored. If you do leave, please turn on a porch light to let us know when your service has been restored.

Being prepared and knowing what to do when the power goes out give residents a greater sense of comfort and control. APS recommends following these tips and is always there to answer questions at (602) 371-7171.

APS, Arizona's largest and longest-serving electricity utility, serves more than 1 million customers throughout the state. With headquarters in Phoenix, APS is the largest subsidiary of Pinnacle West Capital Corp. (NYSE: PNW).