Storm Safety - Be prepared for dangerous weather any time of the year.

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Report a Power Outage at 1-877-264-5368

BEFORE

- **Stay connected to the most up-to-date outage information through Facebook and Twitter** and be sure to visit our real-time outage map on AEC's website.
- **Locate and check your fire extinguisher, first aid kit, and emergency supply kit.** Check with the American Red Cross at www.redcross.org for a complete listing of what your kits should include. Make sure you have nonperishable food on hand for a few days. In the winter, put aside extra blankets. Don't forget a nonelectric can opener!

- **Store water.** This is handy in case of loss of water and sewer, flooding, or water pipes freeze.
- **Have the phone numbers of evacuation destinations** or safe places to stay, as well as a road map to show alternate routes if major roads are closed or clogged.

- **Keep insurance and other vital documents** in a safe place. n Check to see if shrubs or trees need trimming or if you have any weak limbs. If trees or shrubs that need trimming are located near power lines, contact professional tree services. Also, remove items near the home that could possibly become airborne (toys, lawn or patio furniture, trash cans, etc.).

- **Have a battery-powered radio on hand.** Listen to local radio or TV stations for up-to-date storm information or evacuation orders. n In the case of a hurricane, prepare to cover all windows of your home. If shutters have not been installed, use precut plywood. Contrary to popular belief, tape does NOT prevent windows from breaking.

- **Fill your gas tank before a storm arrives**, as gas pumps do not work if electricity is out. Automatic teller machines will also be shut off if the power goes, so get some cash to have on

hand.

- **Plug appliances into surge protectors** or have a system installed to safeguard electronics and appliances from serious damage, or disconnect sensitive electronic equipment to help avoid surges.

DURING

- **If you are not told to evacuate**, stay indoors and away from windows.
- **Be aware that the calm during the hurricane "eye"** is deceptive. Once the eye passes over, winds blow from the opposite direction.

- **Stay clear of flood waters.** If you come upon a flooded road, find another, safer route.
- **Avoid using the land line telephone during a storm.** Electric shock is possible through phone lines (unless it's cordless). Also avoid water sources (shower, sink and bathtub) as lightning can enter a home through plumbing.

- **Remember to disconnect sensitive electronic devices** to protect them from surges that can occur during weather-related outages.

AFTER

- **Keep listening to local radio or TV stations** for instructions. If you evacuated, only return home when local officials say it is safe.

- **Use a quality flashlight and not candles for illumination**, as there may be a gas leak.

- **Leave on a single light** to alert you when electric service is restored. n Disconnect sensitive electronic equipment in advance of the surge that can occur when power comes back on.
- **Minimize opening freezers and refrigerators**. A fully loaded freezer can keep food frozen for up to 48 hours if the door has not been opened.

- **If your neighbor's power is restored and yours is still out**, it could be because of a blown fuse or tripped circuit breaker in your home. Your neighbor's home could also be supplied with electricity from a different electrical supply circuit.

- **Stay clear of fallen utility lines** and avoid tree limbs and debris that could hide fallen

lines. The limbs may carry electricity, especially if they are wet.

- **Do not pile debris near utility poles** or other electric devices after cleaning up outside.
- **Report all outages and downed lines immediately** with only one call per household.

GENERATOR SAFETY

Portable generators are helpful in the event of a temporary power outage, but misuse can cause serious harm or death.
To protect yourself, your neighbors and co-op line personnel, please follow these tips when using a back-up generator.

- **Before you use your generator**, thoroughly read and understand all of the manufacturer's instructions.
- **Isolate your generator from the co-op's power lines** and connect appliances directly to the generator with the appropriate size grounded three conductor electrical cords. It is recommended that you also open the main breaker inside the breaker panel at your home.

- **If you connect a generator directly through your home's wiring,** use a licensed electrician.
- **When a generator is not properly installed**, it can "backfeed" through the transformer and produce an output of 7,200 volts through the co-op's distribution line. This could injure or kill you, your family, your neighbors, or utility crews working on the line.

- **Never refuel a generator while it is operating.**
- **Provide adequate ventilation and air-cooling around the generator** to prevent overheating and the accumulation of toxic exhaust fumes.

- **Do not install a generator in a basement**, attached garage, or any closed area. The exhaust gases from the generator contain carbon monoxide, an invisible, odorless, poisonous gas.
- **Maintain your generator engine according to the maintenance schedule** for peak performance and safety. Regularly test your generator.

- **Keep gas fresh**. If you do not plan to use your generator for up to 30 days, use a gas stabilizer.