

Fire – Emergency Management and Bismarck-Burleigh Public Health

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Don't Be Left in the Dark- Be Prepared For a Power Outage

Bismarck, ND - A power outage can leave you feeling very vulnerable and anxious. Being prepared before a power outage happens can help alleviate stress and keep you safe.

If you are able to remain at home and shelter in place make sure you have an emergency kit prepared and understand the steps you need to take before a power outage occurs.

- Cell phones and cordless phones may not work during a power outage. Be sure to have a standard (corded) phone in your home.
- Make sure you have flashlights and back up batteries for the flashlights.
- Have a battery operated or hand crank radio.
- Contact your local utility company to see if they provide emergency service for those individuals that are dependent on life sustaining medical equipment.
- Have an alternative power source available and ensure you understand how to safely operate it.

If you do plan on having an alternative power source, Bismarck Emergency Manager, Gary Stockert emphasizes, “When purchasing a generator as an alternative power source, please call your preferred certified electrician to safely install the generator for you”.

During a power outage a few safety tips to keep in mind are:

- Turn off electrical appliances and equipment you were using prior to the outage and leave one light on in order to know when power has turned back on.
- Keep refrigerator and freezer doors closed as much as possible. An unopened refrigerator will keep food cold for about 4 hours.
- Never use a generator, grill, camp stove or charcoal burning device inside a home.

After the power outage, be aware of safety concerns that now exist.

- Do not touch any downed or hanging electrical lines or anything they are touching.
- Discard any food that has been at room temperature for two hours or more.
- Discard any food that has an unusual odor, color or texture.
- To be safe, remember, “When in doubt, throw it out.”

Bismarck-Burleigh Public Health now offers a vulnerable population pre-registration system to help identify those who are most vulnerable and where they can be found. Registering into this system should not be considered a guarantee that residents will be placed on a priority list for emergency responders; however it will make emergency responders aware of your individual situation and help us better prepare to assist. The information is kept confidential and only used in the case of an emergency. Examples of when this list might be used to contact registrants include: tornadoes, floods, and power outages.

Please go to www.bismarck.org/PublicHealth and click on Emergency Preparedness for information on how to register for the vulnerable population registry.

For a detailed emergency kit checklist and what to do before, during and after a power outage go to www.bismarck.org/EmergencyManagement

If you are out of power and require sheltering assistance, you can also contact the American Red Cross locally at (701) 223-6700 and press 1 or (866) 342-1799. For sheltering information you can also visit their website at www.redcross.org/nd/fargo .

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