

We've put together some useful information on how to cope during a power outage and who to contact for help.

Remember, you are not alone – there are many people here to help you or provide advice.

All broken or downed power lines should be treated as live. You should stay well away and not attempt to cut or move trees that are in contact with lines. Call 111 to report this as a risk to life and/or property.

Report trees down on public land to Auckland Council on 09 301 0101.

Let's help each other out

Think about visiting neighbours, friends and family that could need your help or consider inviting them to your place. Share what you can.

Here are some ideas of what you could provide: thermos of hot water for tea and coffee, a hot meal, fresh food, hot water bottles, blankets, a camp stove or BBQ, batteries for torches and radios, access to alternative power sources to charge a mobile phone. If you're concerned about a neighbour, friend, or loved one, let one of the support agencies in this brochure know.

Heating, lighting and cooking

DON'T be tempted to use unsafe ways to heat your home. Only use fireplaces that have been safety checked, follow the manufacturer's advice when using gas heaters, NEVER use outdoor gas heaters inside or try to use your BBQ for indoor heating.

DO boil water on your camp stove or BBQ for hot water bottles. Wear extra layers of clothing and use extra blankets, close internal doors and curtains to retain heat.

DO use camp stoves or your BBQ outside and make sure food is cooked thoroughly before eating. Take care with candles or use battery-powered lanterns or torches instead, to prevent fire risk. If using a generator ensure you have enough fuel to keep it going.

Contact us

Auckland Council

For news, building control, council information and assistance:

09 301 0101

For welfare concerns and assistance:

0800 22 22 00

Visit ourauckland.govt.nz for more information

Ministry of Social Development

For financial and emergency accommodation assistance:

0800 559 009

Lifeline

Need to talk? Free call or free text any time for support from a trained counsellor:

0800 543 354 or text 4357

Healthline

Are you feeling unwell but not sure whether to see a doctor? Do you need advice for a friend or family member who is sick? Healthline nurses can help you any time.

0800 611 116

Rural Support Trust

For support and advice for those living in rural areas or links to professionals to provide further support including financial, health, mental health and counselling services:

0800 787 254

If life or property is at risk, call 111.



Helping you cope during a power outage



IMPORTANT HEALTH AND WELFARE INFORMATION INSIDE

Medical help and advice

Contact your doctor or call the Healthline on 0800 611 116 if you're concerned about health issues. Contact your health provider if you need support such as home support services (including those you currently receive). **If life is at risk, call 111.**

Animal welfare

Pets are just as likely to become unwell by consuming unsafe food. If you are disposing of food due to the power outage and it is not safe for you to eat, it is not safe for your pets to eat. If you are boiling water to drink, do the same for your pets. If medication for your pets requires refrigeration, have a backup plan in place.

If your stock drinking water supply is reliant on power to fill troughs, you will need to ensure it does not run out. Keep your pets away from flooding or contaminated water.

For more information about preparing and planning for your animals in an emergency, visit www.mpi.govt.nz/animals-in-emergencies

Security and crime prevention

Unfortunately emergency situations can also prompt criminal activity. Check that neighbours properties are secure and remember, if you see anyone committing a crime or behaving suspiciously, phone 111 and report it to Police. If they are in a vehicle, write down the number plate, vehicle description and any other information. DO NOT put yourself in harm's way.

Hot water

Electric hot water in some parts of Auckland is on a separate lines network to electric power. This means you may have power but no hot water.

If your power and hot water lines have been restored but your hot water cylinder is not reheating after six hours of the hot water line being reconnected, contact your lines provider Vector on 0508 832 867 or Counties Power on 0800 100 202 for advice.

Staying up to date and in touch

Listen to the radio for up to date news and advice. If you don't have a battery operated radio, perhaps listen in your car. Conserve phone battery by limiting mobile calls and data use.

Make use of local community facilities

If your local library or community centre has power, consider dropping in to, meet friends, charge your phone, using the free internet, staying warm and read a book!

If you're driving and traffic lights are out, remember to follow the road code and give way rules.

Financial assistance

The Ministry of Social Development (Work and Income) might be able to help with urgent or unexpected costs such as petrol, food, furniture or living expenses like medical costs, appliance replacement, bedding, food and rent.

You don't have to be on a benefit. You may have to pay the money back depending on your situation. Phone them on 0800 559 009 to discuss your situation.

Insurance

Some insurers provide cover for food spoilage as a result of a power outage. They may also cover the cost of temporary accommodation if you can't stay at home and your home or property been damaged during the storm. Check your policy, phone your insurer for advice and take photographs of damaged items you're claiming for.

Toilet facilities

If your septic tank system is no longer operational, and you don't have alternative options, call a company to hire a temporary toilet.

Food safety and illness prevention

Take care with food from your fridge and freezer to avoid food poisoning and manage spoilage issues. Eat perishable foods first, the contents of your freezer second, and then canned foods.

After more than two days without power, highly perishable foods may not be safe to eat.

- Throw out rotten or contaminated food quickly so it doesn't spoil other food in the fridge.
- You can still eat food like raw vegetables, cheese and bread.
- Dispose of any food from the freezer which has thawed out and been at room temperature for longer than two hours.
- When the power comes back on, it is important not to refreeze food that has defrosted.
- If the frozen food still has ice crystals and the packaging is intact then it can be refrozen.
- If you are unsure, have a closer look and smell. If the colour has changed, it has a slimy texture or if it smells off, it probably is off.
- If you eat food that has gone off, you can risk infection from salmonella, campylobacter and a range of food poisoning bacteria.

Maintaining hygiene around food preparation and cooking requires more thought than normal.

- Always wash and dry your hands before preparing food – if water is in short supply keep some in a bowl with disinfectant.
- Ensure all utensils are clean before use.
- Cook food thoroughly.

Note your contacts

Insurance:

Landlord:

Radio stations:

Medical Centre/ Doctor:

Vet:

School: