

Emergency Planning

Power Outages

Southern California Edison is committed to providing our customers with reliable, high-quality power. However, storms, earthquakes, vehicle accidents, and other events can cause occasional power outages.

It's important to know what to do in the event of a power outage.

Let SCE Know

If your electricity stays off for longer than a few minutes, Southern California Edison wants to know. Call SCE to report a power outage at 800-611-1911.

Please have the following information ready:

- * Your SCE account number
- * The address of the power outage, whether the outage is at a residence or a business
- * The extent of the outage to the best of your knowledge--for instance, does it include your neighbors or nearby blocks?
- * The phone number where you can be reached
- * The time that the outage began, to the best of your knowledge.

If the outage is widespread, our lines may be busy. Please be patient -- your call is important to us, and the information you give us may be our only report from your neighborhood.

If you see downed power lines, stay away. Call us immediately at 800-611-1911.

Stay Safe

These tips can help you and your family stay safe in the event of a power outage.

- * Always keep a flashlight and extra batteries handy. Never use candles in a power outage or other emergency.
- * Turn off or disconnect any appliances or electronics you were using when the power went out.
- * Leave one light turned on so you'll know when your power returns.
- * Don't light a fire indoors. If you're cold, put on layers of warm clothing instead. Never burn charcoal for heating or cooking indoors.

- * Leave the doors of your refrigerator and freezer closed to keep your food as fresh as possible. If you must eat food that was refrigerated or frozen, check it carefully for signs of spoilage.

When you feel confident that your home is secure, check for the source of the outage--it may be easy to discover.

- * Using your flashlight, check throughout your home to see if any of your lights or appliances are working. If some things turn on normally, you may have blown a fuse or tripped a circuit breaker. Click here to find easy to use instructions for resetting a circuit breakers or changing fuses.

- * If none of your lights work, check to see if your neighbor's power is out, too. This will help you determine if the electricity is out in your whole neighborhood, or just your home.

- * If you see a power line or utility pole that has fallen, STAY AWAY. Live power lines can cause serious injury or even kill you. Visit Power Line Safety for more helpful tips.

It's especially important to stay calm in the event of a power outage. Frequently, power outages are caused by other hazards, such as extreme weather or emergency situations.

What Causes Power Outages?

Power outages can be caused by many things:

- * Storms. Wind, heat, ice, and snow are the most common causes of widespread power outages.

- * Trees. During high winds, or trimming by an untrained professional, limbs can come into contact with power lines, causing power interruptions. Visit Tree Trimming to learn more about safety issues and why planting trees near power lines is a bad idea.

- * Vehicles. A vehicle accident with a utility pole can cause a power outage. Check out Power Line Safety for tips on handling these very dangerous situations.

- * Earthquakes. Quakes of all sizes can damage electrical facilities and power lines. Visit Earthquakes for more information on staying safe during these natural disasters.

- * Animals. Squirrels, birds, and other small animals may cause power lines to short circuit.

* Lightning. When lightning strikes transmission towers, wires, and poles, outages occur.

* Excavation Digging. Sometimes underground cables are disturbed by digging. Check out Safety in the Yard and stay safe while gardening or placing fenceposts.

* High Power Demand. During heat waves and other times of unusually high power demand, overburdened electric cables, transformers, and other electrical equipment can melt and fail.

For additional information visit our Document Library and request our free Electrical Safety and Electrical Outages brochures.