Your Guide To Storm Safety

Be ready for dangerous weather anytime
Quick Steps

- Assemble your Storm Kit (see page 2)
- Charge cell phones/computers and other devices & have car charger ready
- Turn refrigerator thermostat to Colder
- Stock up on water and NON-perishable food
- Watch/Listen for local information:
  - Middleboro Community Cable Access Media – Channel 9
  - Lakeville Community Access Media – Channel 95
  - Radio: WVBF 1530 AM; WPLM 99.1 FM, WATD 95.9 FM
  - MGED.com for service instructions
- Know your electrician: _______________________
- Plan for alternate shelter:
  - Designated local area shelter location:
    ____________________________________________
  - Hotel/family address away from home:
    ____________________________________________
  - Medical assistance/hospital location (for life-sustaining equipment):
    ____________________________________________
  - Pet kennel/alternate shelter:
    ____________________________________________
At Middleborough Gas & Electric Department we know that being prepared for a storm is half the battle. We are committed to providing reliable service in every kind of weather. That means being ready before weather threatens, responding quickly when a storm hits, and restoring power as safely and quickly as possible in the event of an outage.

Hurricanes and major blizzards are few and far between but we face storm-related outages in every season, every year. Thinking ahead can give you peace of mind when weather turns threatening. We created this handbook to help you be prepared before, during and after storms. Please keep it with other essential storm-related items in your home.
Before a Storm:

☐ Assemble an emergency storm kit containing:
  • Flashlights and fresh batteries
  • Battery-powered radio or TV and extra batteries
  • Land-line phone with cord (cordless phones require electricity)
  • Battery-powered or windup alarm clock
  • Supply of bottled water (one gallon per person per day)
  • Non-perishable foods that require no heating like energy bars
  • Blankets, bedding or sleeping bags
  • First-aid kit and prescription medications
  • Hand-operated can opener
  • Special medical or infant supplies
  • A variety of hand tools
  • List of emergency phone numbers including insurance contacts

☐ Develop and practice an emergency plan with everyone in your household

☐ Fill your bathtub with water if your water supply depends on electricity

☐ Make sure cell phones are charged

☐ Protect electronic equipment by unplugging when the storm is imminent

☐ Ensure your contact information is up to date with MGED. (Have your account number available and call Customer Service.)

☐ If needed, register for the Emergency Medical Equipment Notification List: call Customer Service

☐ If someone relies on life support equipment, identify an alternate location with power where they can go during an outage – check back-up batteries and oxygen supplies

☐ Evacuate if your area is prone to serious damage

Preparing for storms is something we take seriously.

How we prepare:
  • Continually monitoring weather
  • Scheduling additional MGED staff and crews in case of an outage
  • Working closely with local town officials and emergency responders
  • Activating emergency procedures

Being prepared for storms is everyone’s responsibility.
When a Storm Strikes:

Here are some ways to stay safe when a storm hits:

• Locate your emergency storm kit
• Tune in to local news broadcasts
• Never go near downed wires and always stay clear of working crews
• Avoid wet and flooded areas as electricity and water are dangerous

If Power Goes Out

• Keep freezer and refrigerator doors shut
• In summer, close shades or curtains to keep rooms cooler
• In winter, let the sun warm rooms during the day; at night close shades or curtains to keep warmth in and close off unneeded rooms
• Be safe around candles/open flames

Getting Information

There are several ways you can get information during a storm. But first, it’s important that you notify us that your power is out.

Phone: Call 508-947-3023 to report your outage. Please request a call back so we can verify if individual or small groups of outages still exist. Be prepared to give us a contact number so that we may attempt to call you if necessary. You should also provide an alternative contact number such as a cell phone, a friend or relative in case you must evacuate later so we can get a message to you about your service.

Online: Go to MGED.com and click on “Outage Status”

TV & Radio: Local cable access channels 9 and 95 on Comcast; Radio stations WVBF-1530AM, WPLM-99.1-FM, WATD-95.9-FM

Generator Safety

If you are operating a generator, make sure that you follow all safety guidelines. To protect yourself, your neighbors and our line personnel, please follow these precautions when using a back-up generator.

DO:
• Before you use your generator, thoroughly read, understand and follow all of the manufacturer’s instructions.

DON’T:
• Never 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.
• Do not operate a generator near a natural gas or propane appliance; their pilot flames could ignite gasoline fumes.
• Do not store gasoline near an operating generator which could ignite gasoline fumes as well.
The Recovery Process

We understand that it’s important for our customers to know when their power will be restored. As soon as the storm begins we are continually assessing damage to help provide customers with increasingly precise restoration information.

Our Power Restoration Process

When power goes out, our recovery work begins as soon as conditions are safe for our professionals. Here is the order that we approach systems to help ensure quick and safe restoration of power.

1) Downed live wires or potentially life-threatening situations
2) Transmission lines that link us to generators that provide power to all of our customers
3) Substation equipment that affects widespread areas
4) Main distribution lines serving large numbers of customers
5) Secondary lines serving neighborhoods
6) Service lines to individual homes and businesses

Widespread damage could mean days without power. Know your potential outage duration and make plans for alternate shelter.
Do You know Your Responsibilities?

As the property owner, you also own the electric service cable from the point where it attaches to your house (at the weatherhead) to our meter and from our meter into your home or business. You are also responsible to maintain the meter base. Damage to any part of this structure must be repaired by your electrician before we can reconnect or re-energize our cable at the pole.

**IF** our service line from the pole to your weatherhead has been disconnected from the pole or from your weatherhead due to falling trees or branches, you may also have damage to the weatherhead and entrance cable. Be prepared to have your electrician ready for repairs.

**IF** our service line has pulled your weatherhead and entrance cable from the house, BE AWARE it may still be energized but will need repair. Call MGED and we will de-energize the service line at the pole so that your electrician can make repairs and have the work inspected by the town wiring inspector before we re-energize.

**IF** the wiring inspection is delayed due to wide-spread storm damage, we may make temporary repairs to restore power. It will still be YOUR responsibility to have the final town wiring inspection to approve the work before we make the connections permanent.
Answers To Common Questions

When will you know how long I might be without power?
First, we need to fully assess the damage to 101 square miles of service area. It is impossible to accurately predict restorations of specific circuits serving particular residences because of the many challenges and hazards that may be hidden within tree-damaged areas. We attempt to give updates of our efforts at least twice each day so that residents can gauge our progress. We will always communicate as much information as we possibly can on our Web site, in the media, and with individual calls to customers.

Why did my power come back on, then go off again a few minutes later?
Sometimes, after a line is repaired in one location, other damage causes the line to go out again. At other times, it may be necessary to turn off your power once more to safely repair other problems. In any case, our crews work to restore your power again as soon as safely possible. If your power comes back on, then goes off again, please let us know by calling our outage line.

What should I do about the wire laying in my driveway/street?
Consider all downed lines energized and call MGED. During an outage, where a downed wire is reported, a hazard responder (not a repair crew) shows up first to assess the situation. Once public safety is assured, the hazard responder moves on to the next reported location. Only then does the line crew come to fix the problem. This may take some time. If you are concerned that the wire is endangering your safety, call us.
**Why are my neighbors on and I’m not?**

It’s possible for neighbors to be served by different circuits. Circuits don’t necessarily align with streets, neighborhoods, or community boundaries. There may be damage on the service line between your home and the rest of your neighborhood and even damage to your own service cable. Call us to let us know you are still without power.

**Why haven’t I seen any MGED trucks?**

Our restoration efforts can involve damage reports from locations throughout 101 square miles. You may see trucks and crews we have brought in from other towns to help. Most probably, the cause of your power outage could be a distance away from you and that’s where we are. Even if you don’t see a MGED truck on your street, we will be out there working to get power restored to every customer who has been affected.

**Why do your trucks and people keep going by but nothing is happening?**

Crews may come and then leave your area before power is restored for several reasons:

- Crews may be repairing several locations, on other roads, before power can be restored on the full section serving you.
- Crews may begin work along your road but need to complete the work on other roads before lines can be energized.
- In some cases, you may see our crews in uniform driving other vehicles. They are out in the field to assess damage so we can assign an appropriately skilled repair crew.
After a Storm

When your service is restored, there are a few steps you should take:

• Call us if:
  
  • If something is obviously wrong with your power, call us right away. This could be a sign of damage to your service cable and we will need to work with your electrician to make final repairs.
  
  • You got back from alternative shelter to find your neighbor’s power is on but yours isn’t. Call us to let us know and we’ll check your service cable.
  
  • If you return and smell gas, leave immediately and call 911 from another location.
  
  • If your basement is flooded and your appliances are damaged, call us immediately. We will disconnect service until repairs are made and property has been inspected and approved to re-energize.
  
  • Dangling tree limbs are threatening our service lines in the streets. DO NOT attempt to remove these limbs! We will be cleaning up for weeks and months after service is restored. Please let us know when you spot a potential problem.
  
  • Discard perishable food left in an unpowered refrigerator for longer than 24 hours.
  
  • Take stock of your Storm Kit and replenish supplies.
  
  • Assess your storm strategy – what would you do differently next time?
Report Power Outages and Downed Wires: 508-947-3023
Natural Gas Questions: 508-947-1535
*(If you have a gas safety concern, call 911.)*
Customer Service: 508-947-1371
Police, Fire & all emergencies:
Call 911

MGED.com