

Be prepared

A Checklist for Winter Readiness

Before cold weather strikes, you need to winterize your home or business. Here's a checklist to help you get ready:

- ✓ Install storm shutters, doors and windows. You also can cover windows with plastic from the inside to provide an extra layer of insulation.
- ✓ Caulk and weather-strip doors and windowsills.
- ✓ If necessary, insulate walls and attics to reduce the building's power demands for heat.
- ✓ Repair roof leaks and check the structural ability of the roof to sustain unusually heavy weight from the accumulation of snow, water or ice.
- ✓ Consider buying emergency heating equipment, such as a wood- or coal-burning stove or a kerosene heater.
- ✓ If you use a wood stove, be sure it's properly vented and in good working order. For a kerosene heater, use only the correct fuel. Properly ventilate the area to be used and refuel the unit outdoors once it has cooled.
- ✓ Know how to shut off the main water valve to your building and how to shut off and drain outside faucets. Keep a wrench near the valves.
- ✓ Install heat tape on water pipes. You also can protect pipes by letting faucets drip a little and by wrapping pipes in insulation or layers of newspaper, and then covering them with plastic.
- ✓ Store a first aid kit, a non-electric can opener, a radio, a flashlight and extra batteries where you can get to them easily, even in the dark.
- ✓ Store extra drinking water and foods that require little or no preparation.
- ✓ Get a NOAA Weather Radio to monitor severe weather.
- ✓ If you have an electric garage door opener, learn how to open the door manually in case the power fails.
- ✓ Ensure that any outbuildings that shelter animals can withstand wind, heavy snow and ice.
- ✓ Keep your cars fueled and make sure they have the proper level of antifreeze. Each vehicle should be stocked with a blanket, jumper cables, a tow rope, sand (or kitty litter) and a shovel.
- ✓ Consider buying a cell phone. Cell phones often work when other phone lines go down.

- ✓ Don't close doors or windows on extension cords, or mount lights in a way that can damage a cord's insulation.
- ✓ Stay away from power lines leading from utility poles.
- ✓ Fasten lights to trees, walls or other firm supports. Use insulated staples (not tacks or nails) to hold strings of lights in place, or run the strings through hooks.
- ✓ Turn off holiday lights when you go to bed or leave the house.

Please remember that severe weather or other emergencies may require that your energy bill will be temporarily calculated based on estimates, rather than actual meter readings. In these rare crisis situations, our cooperative works closely with members to resolve all billing questions.

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Kentucky's Touchstone Energy Cooperatives 