



Cut off all but one circuit breaker during an outage

When an extended power outage occurs, it's a good idea to turn off all household circuit breakers except one you use for indoor lighting. Once power has been restored, you should wait 15 to 20 minutes and then begin to turn breakers back on. It helps to prevent a sudden overloading of the co-op's own breaker system when power is restored. The "one breaker" policy is especially helpful during times of high energy demand posed by extreme winter or summer temperatures. Also, if something like an electric stovetop is on when the power goes out, it could pose a safety hazard, because you may not remember it when the power is restored.



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AFTER THE STORM

What electric cooperatives do to restore your electric service



Step 2. A co-op may have several local distribution substations, each serving thousands of consumers. When a major outage occurs, the local distribution substations are checked first. A problem here could be caused by failure in the transmission system supplying the substation. If the problem can be corrected at the substation level, power may be restored to a large number of people.

Step 3. Main distribution supply lines are checked next if the problem cannot be isolated at the substation. These supply lines carry electricity away from the substation to a group of consumers, such as a town or housing development. When power is restored at this stage, all consumers served by this supply line could see the lights come on, as long as there is no problem farther down the line.

The main goal is to restore power safely to the greatest number of members in the shortest time possible.

The major cause of outages is damage caused by fallen trees. That's why your electric cooperative has an ongoing right-of-way maintenance program.

This illustration explains how power typically is restored after a major disaster.

Step 5. Sometimes, damage will occur on the service line between your house and the transformer on the nearby pole. This can explain why you have no power when your neighbor does. Your co-op needs to know you have an outage here, so a service crew can repair it.

Step 4. The final supply lines, called tap lines, carry power to the utility poles or underground transformers outside houses or other buildings. Line crews fix the remaining outages based on restoring service to the greatest number of consumers.

During a major outage, other cooperatives send line crews to assist with restoring power. These additional crews, as well as communications, equipment and supplies, are coordinated through the cooperatives' statewide organization.

Report your outage to the cooperative office. Employees or response services use every available phone line to receive your outage reports. Remember that a major outage can affect thousands of other members. Your cooperative appreciates your patience.

Individual households may receive special attention if loss of electricity affects life support systems or poses another immediate danger. If you or a family member depend on life support, call your cooperative before an emergency arises.

DANGER!
Stay clear
of fallen
lines