



Important safety tips for Electric and Gas Safety

Source: PSEG Hurricane Irene Web site on InfoCentral



For updates on PSE&G outage information, please visit:



[**www.twitter.com \psegoutageinfo**](http://www.twitter.com/psegoutageinfo)

What To Do if You Lose Power

- If you lose power, first check your fuse and/or circuit breaker box and main breaker if appropriate. If that is not the problem, and your neighbors also have no power, call PSE&G at 1-800-436 7734.
- If your fuse or breakers are in a flooded area, do not go near them until the water recedes or is removed.
- Always stay away from fallen power lines, and always assume they are energized. Notify us at 1-800-436-7734 if you notice wires are down in your area.
- Know how to open your garage door without the electric opener.
- Remember, electric well and sump pumps will not operate.
- Unplug all motor-driven appliances like refrigerators and freezers and sensitive electronic equipment (like TVs, microwaves and computers) to prevent a possible electrical overload when power is restored.
- Leave one light switch on to indicate when power is restored.
- Have a battery-operated radio and flashlight handy.

Tips to prevent food spoilage:

- Keep the refrigerator and freezer doors closed. An unopened refrigerator will keep foods cold enough for a few hours. A freezer that is half full will hold food safely for up to 24 hours and a full freezer, between 36 and 48 hours.
- Throw a blanket over appliances for added insulation.
- You can also extend food storage by packing refrigerated milk, dairy products, meats, fish poultry, eggs, and other foods in a cooler surrounded by ice.
- Specific advice on food spoilage is available from the [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention](#) and from the [American Red Cross](#).

Downed Power Lines

Wires installed on utility poles carry electricity. And when wires are down, they are dangerous—electricity can still flow through them.

Never assume that a downed power line is not energized, as it still could be "live."

TO REPORT A DOWNED WIRE: Call 1-800-436-PSEG and tell PSE&G the nearest cross street or the number of a nearby pole that has not been damaged and is away from any downed wires. The pole number can be found on the metal tag attached to the pole.

The bottom line: Never go near or touch an electrical wire. Never go near or touch anything or anyone that has come in contact with an electrical wire.

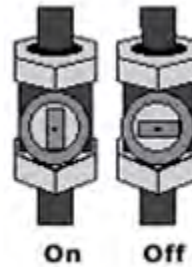
- Stay at least 300 feet away from all downed wires--and keep others from going near them as well. Call PSE&G at 1-800-436-7734 or the police or fire department immediately.
- Any wire on the ground or hanging from a pole must be considered live. Telephone and cable TV wires may be entangled with electric wires and must also be treated as live.
- Be especially careful when driving or parking a vehicle near downed wires. If downed wires are in the street, near the curb, or on the sidewalk, use extreme caution. Never drive over downed power lines. Even if not energized, they can become entangled in your vehicle.
- In the event that a wire comes down on a vehicle with passengers, our advice is to stay in the vehicle until professional help arrives to safely remove you from the vehicle. If you MUST get out of the vehicle because of fire or other life-threatening hazards, jump clear of the vehicle so that you do not touch any part of the car and the ground at the same time. Jump as far as possible away from the vehicle with both feet landing on the ground at the same time. Once you clear the vehicle, shuffle away, with both feet on the ground, or hop away, with both feet landing on the ground at the same time. Do not run away from the vehicle as the electricity forms rings of different voltages. Running may cause your legs to "bridge" current from a higher ring to a lower voltage ring. This could result in a shock. Get a safe distance away.
- Never use water on an electric fire, burning vehicle or wire, or extend a pole or stick that can create a path through which the electricity can travel. Our human instinct is to reach out to help, but touching an individual who has been energized also provides a path through which electricity can travel. Call 911 for help immediately.
- Do not attempt to cut or remove a tree that is, or could become, entangled with power lines. Contact PSE&G for assistance and wait for a professional tree removal crew to do the job.
- Look up! Always examine your surroundings for power line locations before doing any outside work.
- Do not throw objects up into power lines, as this can cause short circuits that could result in injuries. This includes items you might not consider conductive, such as ropes and strings.
- Teach children never to play around electric equipment and never to touch power lines. They could be seriously injured or killed if they touch live electrical equipment.

How to protect your meter and natural gas appliances from flood damage

- Turn off electrical power to each appliance and leave it off.
- Shut off the natural gas supply valve to the appliance (usually found on the gas line to the appliance). Do not attempt any further work until this has been done.
- Any natural gas appliance that is removed must have the open end of the pipe leading from the valve to the appliance capped or plugged. This will prevent the back flow of floodwater into the gas piping system. You can do this by using plugs or pipe caps available at hardware and plumbing supply stores.
- If you are evacuating your premises, shut off your gas valve at the meter. You can turn your gas off at the main shut-off valve on the inlet pipe next to your gas meter. Using a 12-inch adjustable wrench or other suitable tool, turn the valve a quarter (1/4) turn in either direction until the valve is crosswise (perpendicular) to the pipe (See Diagram).



**Close-up
of a typical
gas valve**



On

Off

Dealing with basement flooding

- Customers should call PSE&G immediately at 1-800-880-7734 (PSEG) if they smell gas.
- Stay out of buildings that remain in the floodwaters.
- Use extreme caution when entering buildings.
- Be careful walking on floors and stairs that have been covered with mud. They may be very slippery.
- Hold the railing (if there is one) and step to the side of the stairs as you go up and down.
- Don't go into basements with standing water, raw sewage or obvious electric hazards.
- Watch out for animals and snakes that may have been flooded out of their homes and are seeking shelter.
- Stay away from the breaker box in a flooded basement. Don't go into a flooded basement if energized wires are present.
- Look for fire hazards.
- Inspect foundations for cracks or other damage.
- Pump out flooded basements gradually (about one-third of the water per day) to avoid structural damage.
- Consider your family's health and safety. Wash hands frequently with soap and clean water if you come in contact with floodwaters. Listen for news reports to learn whether the community's water supply is safe to drink.
- Throw away food, including canned goods that may have been in contact with floodwaters.

Customer response to area flooding:

1. If the natural gas is shut off at the meter, do not try to turn it back on.
2. Flooded areas of the home/building must be cleared of water.
3. Some towns or municipalities may require an inspection prior to restoring gas or electric service. After water has been cleared, contact your town/municipality to determine if an inspection is required.
4. If the inspector finds damage to the electric facilities (electric panel, meter box), you must have a contractor make repairs.
5. Following any electric repairs by your contractor, contact the town/municipality to obtain a re-inspection, if required.
6. Once the home/building has passed inspection, please contact PSE&G to [restore service](#).

Inside Safety Concerns

- Pools of water and even appliances can be electrically charged. This can result in a dangerous electrical fire.
- Appliances that have been exposed to water can short out and become a fire hazard.
- Follow the manufacturer's instructions and guidelines when using generators.
- Use a generator or other fuel-powered machines outside the home. Hazardous carbon monoxide (CO) fumes are odorless and can quickly overwhelm you if a generator is used indoors.
- Use appropriate sized and type power cords to carry the electric load. Overloaded cords can overheat and cause a fire hazard.
- Never run electric cords under rugs or carpets where heat might build up.
- Never connect generators to another power source such as power lines. The reverse flow of electricity or backfeed can pose an electrocution threat to an unsuspecting utility worker.
- Do not use the kitchen range to heat your home. Doing so would create a fire hazard and an accumulation of life threatening levels of carbon monoxide.

Outside Safety Concerns

- Listen to the radio or television for storm recovery information.
- Do not walk through moving water. Use a pole or stick to make sure that the ground is still there before you go through an area where the water is not flowing and to check the depth of the water.
- Do not wade through a flooded stream to protect or retrieve belongings.
- Watch where you step. Flood water may carry debris that includes broken bottles and nails.
- Drive with caution if traffic lights and railroad crossing signals are not operating.
- Don't drive around road barriers - the road or bridge may be washed out.
- Do not drive into flooded areas. If floodwaters rise around your car, abandon the car and move to higher ground, if you can do so safely. You and the vehicle can be quickly swept away.
- Be especially careful when driving or parking a vehicle near downed wires. If downed wires are in the street, near the curb, or on the sidewalk, use extreme caution. Never drive over downed power lines. Even if not energized, they can become entangled in your vehicle.
- In the event that an electric line or wire comes down on a vehicle with passengers, stay in the vehicle until professional help arrives to safely remove you from the vehicle.
- It is important to remember that wires installed on utility poles carry electricity. When wires are down, they are dangerous -- electricity can still flow through them. Never assume that a downed power line is not energized as they still could be "live."
- When the rain is combined with storm damage and flooding, electrocution hazards emerge. All downed power lines, even if not moving or sparking, are dangerous and should never be approached. Stay at least 300 feet away from all downed wires - and keep others from going near them as well. Call PSE&G at 1-800-436-7734 or the police or fire department immediately to report any downed wire.
- Establish a backup power or temporary relocation plan if someone in your home is dependent on electric-powered medical equipment.
- Do not forget your home security alarm system when an outage occurs. Do you have instructions on how to reset it when power resumes?
- Turn off air conditioners or major appliances that were running when the outage occurred to help avoid a sudden surge of power when electric service is restored.
- Provide assistance to elderly neighbors or relatives.