



Power outages can occur from a variety of situations, such as ice storms. The loss of power to farms using mechanical ventilation, bulk milk-handling equipment, automated feeding systems, heat or refrigeration can result in economic and livestock losses. Preparing now can minimize the impact and protect your livestock and equipment.

Before a Power Outage

- **Have a standby or backup power source.**
 - This is especially important if you have vital electrical equipment on your farm.
 - If and when possible, buy equipment that has a battery powered backup system.
- **Protect electrical equipment.**
 - Install surge protectors and/or battery back-up systems for sensitive electronic equipment (e.g., computers).
 - Prepare a list of equipment that will need to be turned off during an outage.
- **Develop a emergency preparedness plan.**
 - Have a list of emergency contact numbers.
 - Have a plan on how to maintain operations on your farm should the power go out.
- **Have an emergency plan for water and feed resources for your livestock.**
 - Obtain emergency supplies of forage and grain.
 - Identify emergency resources for water.
 - Have a list of suppliers, truckers, and people that can help with the animals, especially if normal working conditions are disrupted.

During a Power Outage

- **Backup power.**
 - Use standby or backup power sources for emergency power.
 - Only use generators in well-ventilated areas. Generators are a major cause of fatal carbon monoxide poisoning, which can cause loss of consciousness and death.
 - The most common symptoms are headache, dizziness, weakness, nausea, vomiting, chest pain, and confusion.
 - Use battery-operated light sources (flashlights or glow sticks). Do not use candles due to the risk of fire.
- **Equipment safety.**
 - Unplug or turn off all electrical equipment to prevent damage from electrical surges or spikes when power is eventually restored.

- **Ventilation for livestock.**
 - Do not close buildings tight to conserve heat, since animals could suffocate from lack of oxygen.
 - Open vents to facilitate natural air flow. Clear any debris from all vents.
 - Poultry facilities should be equipped with knock-out panels for emergency ventilation.
 - In dairy facilities, open doors or turn cows outside.
- **Food for livestock.**
 - Mechanical feeders will be inoperable during a power failure.
 - Have a plan in place for emergency feeding procedures.
- **Water for livestock.**
 - Provide all animals with plenty of water.
 - Your water pump may be driven with a small gasoline-powered engine; otherwise, you will need to haul water.
 - If you have an outside source of water, cattle can be turned out.
 - Regardless of the source of water, be sure it remains clean and safe for animal consumption.
 - As a last resort, dairy cattle can be fed their own milk if there is no water available.
- **Environmental conditions for livestock.**
 - If the power outage occurs during winter weather, back up heating measures will be needed.
 - If the power outage occurs during hot weather, back up air conditioning or ventilation will be needed.
 - Plan ahead to have the necessary equipment ready for these situations.

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