

Power Outage

Power outages can be caused by a number of things, including severe weather, trees coming in contact with electrical lines or equipment, motor vehicle accidents, or equipment failure. Faulty wiring and equipment inside your building can cause a localized outage. In the event of a major, campus-wide outage, the University has emergency generators that will restore power to some areas of campus.

To report a minor, localized power outage in residential housing, call (734)763-4948. If there is a minor power outage in campus areas other than residential housing, call the Plant Operations Call Center at (734) 647-2059.

Updated

June 21, 2011

Source

U-M Plant Operations

DTE Energy

More Information

<http://www.dteenergy.com/residentialCustomers/problemsSafety/safety/electric/electricSafety.htm>
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<http://www.plantops.umich.edu/>

Prevention / Mitigation / Preparedness – Power Outage

Back up critical data often. Store back-up copies in a secure, fireproof location off-site.

Review the protective actions section of this EOP regarding persons with disabilities and identify staff that will assist and discuss efforts needed to get those persons into a safe location.

Assess the impact a loss of electrical power will have on potable water supplies. Water pressure may be inadequate to supply sinks and toilets. Instructions on limiting use of toilets may be needed.

Ensure there are sufficient flashlights for distribution for any response team, facilities and custodial staff, as well as the Residence Life staff.

Evaluate the adequacy of emergency lighting to illuminate all exit travel paths. Periodically, inspect and test each unit to ensure reliability.

Check all exit door locking mechanisms to ensure they unlock when power is lost.

Determine whether there is any residual hydraulic energy to lower elevator cabs to the ground floor.

Assess building security systems to determine if they would be functional during a blackout. Locking systems may fail, requiring supervision of points of entry and egress.

Know the location of the following:

- Electrical main disconnects and sub panels, and know the areas of the building they control
- Domestic potable water source
- Fire protection (sprinkler riser and sectional control valves)
- Steam lines
- Gas meter and main shutoff valve
- Location of oil tanks / propane tanks

Establish a three deep system of person located at the building and provide training on what to do when a power outage occurs.

Determine how information on the event will be obtained and delivered to building occupants.

Key staff should have a means of communicating during a power outage. Cellular telephones, two way radios or pagers are suggested.

Response – Power Outage

Unless you have an emergency, do **not** call 911.

Stay calm. Reassure staff, faculty and students.

The Building Incident Response Team (BIRT) will be activated to ensure all persons in the building are in a safe location. Seek out persons with special needs and provide assistance.

Elevators will not be operational. If someone is stuck inside, have them use the interior telephone to direct dial to 911. Do not try to free the persons yourself as they may be trapped between floors. Stay near the passengers until DPS or other assistance arrives, provided it is safe to do so.

Key building staff will attempt to assess the scope and expected duration of the outage known. They will do the following to evaluate the problem to try and determine if the outage is localized (office/building only) or widespread (campus/city-wide):

On-site: Determine if there are safety hazards affecting building occupants. Contact Plant Operations for assistance (734) 647-2059. Determine if life-safety systems have been affected. Isolate hazardous areas to prevent harm and/or evacuate the building as appropriate.

Off-site: Ask DTE to determine probable duration of outage. Determine if life-safety systems have been affected. Isolate hazardous areas and/or evacuate the building as appropriate.

If possible, determine if critical operating systems have been affected. These may include: HVAC systems, computer systems, communications and signaling systems. Contact Plant Operations for needed assistance.

Remain in secured areas and do not move around the building unnecessarily.

Switch off all computers and other electronic equipment to protect them from a power surge when the power is restored. Turn off the light switches.

Laboratory personnel should secure all experiments, unplug electrical equipment (including computers) and shut off research gases prior to evacuating. All chemicals should be stored in their original locations, and fume hoods must be fully closed. If this is not possible or natural ventilation is inadequate, evacuate the laboratory until the power is restored. Contact OSEH at (734) 647-1143 for guidance.

Do not use candles, lighters or other types of open flames for illumination purposes.

Academic / Business / Event Operations

Determine the impact on the event if there is a power outage. Per building and fire codes, facilities cannot stay occupied without electrical power. This is not to imply that occupants must immediately evacuate the building as required during fire alarm activation. Additionally, occupants should not be forced out into inclement weather simply because the power is out. However, emergency lighting is meant to ensure egress only and is not intended to allow for continued building occupancy.

Cancellation policies in the event of a power outage must be communicated amongst students / staff / faculty / guests. Each facility should have an agreed upon time frame that they may suspend an event while waiting for power to be restored, prior to cancelling/terminating operations. Because power outages may be caused by such a myriad of events, it is impossible to state a definitive time that is applicable to all circumstances. For the purposes of this document and to establish a reference point, one half (.5) hour is the recommended time frame that should be allocated prior to cancelling/terminating an event due to a power outage.

Recovery – Power Outage

Be careful if there are downed power lines. Do not touch them or any object that comes in contact with them. Contact 911 immediately for assistance.

Debrief with all parties involved in the response and recovery efforts to discuss strengths and weaknesses and what could have been done better.

Contact the Risk Management department (734) 764-2200 so claims management and other insurance matters can be handled.

Be cautious around electrical equipment (including computers) when power returns as electrical surge may occur which could result in arcing / equipment damage.