



Alan W. Wattles

## Across The President's Desk

## The power of preparation

With severe weather events occurring more frequently, now more than ever it makes sense to be prepared. During a prolonged power outage or other emergency, this means having enough food, water and supplies to last at least a few days.

In honor of National Preparedness Month in September, I want to remind members of our community about the power of preparation. While you don't have to achieve a "doomsday" level of preparedness, there are several practical steps you can take to keep you and your family safe.

Even at a modest level, preparation can help reduce stress and anxiety and lessen the impact of an emergency event. We recommend starting with the basics.

Here are general guidelines recommended by the Federal Emergency Management Agency:

- Assemble a grab-and-go disaster kit. Include items like nonperishable food, water (one gallon per person per day), diapers, batteries, flashlights, prescription medications, first-aid kit, battery-powered radio and phone chargers.
- Develop a plan for communicating with family and friends (i.e., via text, social media, third party, etc.)
- Have some extra cash available; during a power outage, electronic card readers and cash machines may not work.
- Store important documents (birth certificates, property deed, etc.) in safe place away from

home (for example, a bank safe deposit box).

- Keep neighbors and co-workers apprised of your emergency plans.
- Fill your car with gas.
- Organize your supplies so they are together in an easily accessible location that family members know about.

### Caring for vulnerable family members

If you have older family members or those with special needs, make sure they have enough medication and supplies for a few days. If they don't live with you, arrange for a neighbor to check in on them. If a severe weather event is expected, consider having your relative stay with you if feasible, otherwise call them daily. If you have an infant or young children, make certain that you have ample formula, diapers, medications and other supplies on hand to weather an outage lasting several days or more.

### Keeping four-legged family members safe

Having a plan in place for pets in the event of a prolonged outage or an emergency will also help reduce worry and stress, especially if you need to make a decision during an emergency.

- Bring pets indoors at the first sign of a storm or other emergency. Pets can become disoriented and frightened during severe weather and may wander off during an emergency.

- Microchip your pet and ensure the contact information is up to date.
- Store pet medical records on a USB drive or in an easy-to-remember location.
- Create an emergency kit for pets (include shelf-safe food, bottled water, medications, and other supplies).



At MCEC, we care about your safety. Planning for an emergency situation today can give you more confidence to deal with severe weather and potential outages in the future.

MCEC line outages July 2022	Date	Duration	# Out	Map Location	Cause Desc	Substation
	7/1/2022	1:06	26	Saeger Rd/Meadow Acres	Unknown	Millstadt
	7/8/2022	0:36	3	Kropp Rd	Trees, Other	Millstadt
	7/9/2022	1:35	45	Lake Ronnie	Small Animals Or Birds	Waterloo
	7/14/2022	1:07	41	Ames Rd/Vv Rd	Unknown	Poe
	7/18/2022	1:10	69	Brand Woods	Other, Faulty Equipment	Poe
	7/19/2022	2:26	20	Grant Rd	Trees, Other	Fults
	7/20/2022	4:46	6	Sugar Loaf Hill Rd	Other, Deterioration	East Carondelet
	7/26/2022	1:07	13	Bridge Ln	Lightning	East Carondelet
	7/28/2022	0:42	5	Bluff Rd	Small Animals Or Birds	Fountain
	7/30/2022	3:56	2	Fahey Ln	Public Accidents, Other	Poe

## Energy Efficiency

### Tip of the Month

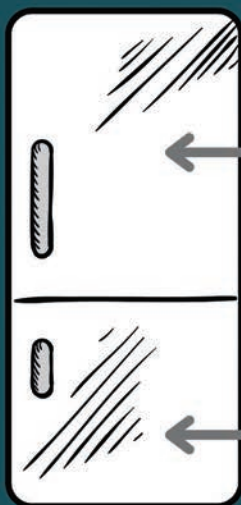
Water heating accounts for a large portion of home energy bills. To save energy (and money!) used for water heating, repair any leaky faucets, install low-flow fixtures and insulate accessible hot water lines. When it's time to purchase a new washing machine or dishwasher, look for models that are ENERGY STAR®-certified.

Source: Dept. of Energy



## Keep Food Safe During and After a Power Outage

Refrigerated or frozen foods may not be safe to eat after a power outage. Use these tips to minimize food loss and reduce risk of illness.



Refrigerated food will last four hours. After four hours, place refrigerated foods in a cooler with ice.

**24** OR **48**

Food in a **half-full** freezer will last 24 hours. Food in a **full** freezer will last 48 hours.

### Food Safety Tips

1. Keep refrigerator and freezer doors closed as much as possible.
2. Throw out any food with an unusual odor, color or texture.
3. Throw out perishable food in your refrigerator after four hours without power or a cold source (like a cooler with ice).

**When in doubt, throw it out!**



# What is a Generator **TRANSFER SWITCH?**

A transfer or throw switch, sometimes called a double throw switch, is an essential mechanism that shuts off power to the grid before backup power is used.

## **The transfer switch has an important job.**

The switch is typically used for generators rated at 5,000 watts or more.

It connects the generator to your home's main circuits to provide backup power during an outage.

In other words, the transfer switch changes or transfers the power load from one source to another.

It prevents power from backfeeding into the power grid and endangering utility workers and others.

## **The type of switch depends on the type of generator.**

A permanent standby generator has an internal switch that automatically transfers the source of power. Standby generators must be installed by licensed contractors, usually at the side of a home.

Standby generators are called just that because they automatically turn on when the power goes out.



Not all permanently installed generators are standby versions. Some have manual transfer switches. Make sure your permanent generator and switch are installed to code and working properly.

Portable generators can also be connected to your home's electrical service panel that is properly wired through a transfer switch. If you use a portable generator, never plug it into a wall outlet as this can cause backfeed.

## **Always use a generator safely.**

Learn more at:

**Safe  
Electricity.org®**





## with farm vehicles and school buses

September is here. Farmers will soon be starting their harvest, and kids are on their way to school each weekday. That means motorists will be encountering farm equipment and school buses on rural roads, increasing the potential for accidents.

Road safety is especially important as tractors, combines, large trucks, buses and cars share the road in the fall.

Vehicle collisions are often the result of the speed differential between slower-moving vehicles and passenger cars and trucks. Many times passenger vehicle drivers simply don't have enough time to react if they do not recognize the slowed or stopped vehicles ahead.

### Keep in mind the following safety tips for motorists as you share the road with farm equipment:

- ▲ Farm machinery has a legal right to use public roads just as other motor vehicles.
- ▲ Farm machinery can unexpectedly turn onto a public road from a field or driveway. Farm machinery travels slower than normal traffic, often at speeds of 25 miles per hour or less. Automobile drivers must quickly identify farm equipment and slow down immediately to avoid rear-end crashes.
- ▲ Farm machinery operators may not be able to see you because the large equipment or a load can block part of their rear view. If you can't see the driver, the driver can't see you.
- ▲ Extra-wide farm machinery may take up more than one lane to avoid hitting obstacles such as mailboxes and road signs.

School buses have the extra danger of kids getting on or off the bus, and they often cross the road to their homes. If you see a school bus in your lane or coming towards you, pay close attention to what it's doing. Give the bus extra space and be prepared to stop suddenly as it loads or unloads its cargo (kids).

### Here are some rules to follow:

- ▲ School buses are required to stop at railroad crossings, so be ready to hit the brakes if you're behind one.
- ▲ Pay attention to any stop signs or signals on the bus.
- ▲ If a bus has its red lights flashing, you must stop from either direction unless you are on a divided highway.



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