

## **Power Outages in Ontario**

A sustained power outage has the potential to adversely impact public safety, the environment, security and the economy. The general public can prepare for power outages before they happen.

### **The Ontario electricity Emergency Plan**

The Province of Ontario and the Independent Electricity System Operator (IESO) have an Ontario Electricity Emergency Plan that is used in the event of a large-scale electricity emergency in Ontario. The IESO, in consultation with the Ministry of Energy, can declare an electricity emergency.

The IESO has a three-level media advisory process to alert the public to any power disruptions. Others in the electricity industry can also be expected to issue media advisories to address local or specific issues.

**Power Advisory:** This is issued when electricity is in tight supply. All electricity consumers and industries are asked to voluntarily reduce their electricity consumption.

**Power Warning:** This is issued when there is an elevated level of concern about the reliability of the electricity supply and the IESO is implementing emergency control actions. All electricity consumers, including industries, are asked to immediately reduce their electricity consumption. Any further unforeseen increase in electricity demand, or reduction in supply, may result in the need to implement load shedding. Load shedding means that electricity supply to consumers will be disrupted on a rotating basis across the province for approximately 30 minutes to an hour, depending on the extent of the electricity shortfall. Under these circumstances, advance notice may not be possible.

**Power Emergency:** This is issued as a last resort when the IESO must implement load shedding.

## **Community Response**

As with any emergency, communities have emergency response plans and organizations in place to deal with an extended power outage. They work closely with their local electricity distributor (e.g. local utility commission or company) and Emergency Management Ontario to monitor the situation, and ensure that public safety is protected during a power outage.

**Some of the ways you can prepare for a power outage:**

Prepare your Emergency Survival Kit in advance so that you can be ready for any emergency. Read the [Emergency Survival Checklist](#) Fact Sheet produced by Emergency Management Ontario called on the EMO website.

Acquire and read the Winter power Failures brochure available through Emergency Management Ontario or through the Public Safety and Emergency Preparedness website at <http://www.psepc-sppcc.gc.ca/prg/em/gds/omni2-en.asp>.

Know who your local electricity distributor is and how to contact them to report a power outage. It is very important that emergency 911 phone lines are not used to report a power outage, as these lines are needed to report medical, fire and police emergencies.

Learn how to reduce your electricity consumption by reading the brochure available on [www.energy.gov.on.ca](http://www.energy.gov.on.ca)

Listen to the media for information from the province and the electricity industry regarding power advisories, warnings and emergencies.

Purchase a battery-operated, portable radio and extra batteries so that you can receive emergency information in your home or workplace during an outage.

**For more information about electricity in Ontario, visit these sites:**

Hydro One: [www.hydroone.com](http://www.hydroone.com)

Independent Electricity System Operator: [www.ieso.ca](http://www.ieso.ca)