

# Hurricane Tips



1-239-656-2300  
1-800-599-2356  
[www.lcec.net](http://www.lcec.net)

## AFTER THE STORM

Post-storm plans can play as important a role as pre-storm preparation. The following are tips to remember while formulating your post-storm plan:

- ▲ Stay clear of downed power lines. They may still be energized and dangerous. Puddles of water contacting downed lines are just as dangerous.
- ▲ Help keep utility telephone lines clear for emergency calls by only calling to report downed power lines. However, if your neighbor's power has been restored and yours is still out, please call to report.



- ▲ If your home is without electricity, turn off individual circuit breakers or remove fuses at the electrical panel. This will protect your family, home and appliances. Leave one breaker on to operate a light to let you know when power is back on.
- ▲ Don't trim trees or remove debris located near downed power lines. If you must remove debris from in or around your home, don't pile it under or near electrical lines or equipment.
- ▲ If operating a portable generator, keep the machine in an open area. Carbon monoxide emissions can be harmful. Follow all instructions regarding safe

operation. Do not connect directly to main electrical panel. If installed incorrectly, power could flow into outside lines and injure you, your neighbors or unsuspecting utility crews working in the area.

- ▲ Any damage to your home's electric system must be repaired by an electrician and inspected by a designated agency before power can be restored. Check your weatherhead (on the roof where your service drop connects to the pole) and your meter box.
- ▲ If your home is served by underground service check your meter box and conduit.
- ▲ If you suspect water is in the walls or ceiling, stay away from electrical



outlets and contact an electrician to repair the damage.

- ▲ For speed and efficiency, you and your neighbors could try to get one licensed electrician to inspect all of your homes.
- ▲ If you need to live in temporary quarters on your property due to damage to your home, an electrician can install a temporary service pole. After the pole is inspected by a designated agency, your electric utility can provide power.



## RESIDENTS ON LIFE SUPPORT SHOULD TAKE EXTRA PRECAUTIONS DURING A HURRICANE

LCEC knows how important reliable electric service is to our customers, especially those using life-support devices. We make every effort to prevent outages, but sometimes outages do occur. Here are tips for residents on life support:

- ▲ Have an alternate plan in place to ensure the continuity of any life-support needs. This may include making special arrangements to spend time with a friend or relative during an outage or using a back-up generator.
- ▲ Customers who use a back-up generator are responsible for safe installation, which disconnects the generator from LCEC facilities. If not installed correctly, generators present a safety risk to the public and LCEC line crews.
- ▲ Keep phone numbers of emergency response agencies, such as the hospital, fire department and police, in a convenient location, in the event emergency assistance is needed.
- ▲ Ensure that you have a back-up telephone if you use a cordless or telephone that is dependent on electricity.
- ▲ Have a battery-powered radio on hand and a supply of fresh batteries to stay aware of news and other information.
- ▲ Keep a flashlight and extra batteries handy.

## WHEN TO REPORT AN OUTAGE



Losing electric service during Southwest Florida's storm season can be a startling experience if you aren't aware of the proper procedures to take during power outages.

Before calling LCEC to report a power outage, check to see if your neighbors have power. If your neighbors have lights and you don't, you may be able to quickly restore power by checking all circuit breakers and resetting them. If your breakers aren't the problem, one of the following situations may have occurred:

- ▲ Power lines coming into your home may have been disconnected
- ▲ A transformer serving only your home may have been damaged

Once LCEC determines the locations of outages, priorities for restoring power are established.

During widespread outages, such as those resulting from a hurricane, please try to keep telephone lines clear for emergencies by eliminating repeat calls to report your outage. In addition, please do not detain line crews while they are working in your neighborhood.

LCEC knows that being without power is inconvenient. It is our priority to do everything possible to restore your power quickly.

To report a power outage call:  
During business hours: 656-2300 or 1-800-599-2356  
After business hours: 995-2121 or 1-800-282-1643

## USE CAUTION WITH PORTABLE GENERATORS

Many Southwest Florida residents use portable electric generators to power their homes during electrical outages. While generators are a convenience, they can be dangerous if used improperly.

The safest way to operate a generator is to plug appliances directly into the generator. However, customers who are utilizing a back-up generator to provide electricity to their entire home must use a double throw switch to disconnect their electric service equipment from LCEC's system. This is necessary to prevent a dangerous back feed of energy into LCEC lines and equipment, which creates a hazard to residents, electrical equipment and unsuspecting line crews working in the area. If an automatic transfer system is proposed for this transfer function, the specific system must be approved by LCEC before it may be used.

Before you buy and install a generator, here are a few tips to keep in mind.

- ▲ Determine how much electricity you need for your home. You want to be sure to buy the right size generator.
- ▲ As a safety precaution, consult with an electrician before you hook up your generator.
- ▲ Be sure when you start your generator, that you place it outside where the fumes can escape without harming anyone.

