

# Outage Ready

## *Emergency essentials to stay safe and prepared*

When the lights go out, being prepared makes all the difference. Follow these simple tips to stay safe, warm and ready during any power outage.

### **Short-term power failures:**

- Check to see if your neighbors still have electricity.
- If your neighbors have electricity, the problem could be inside your home. Check your main fuses or circuit breakers to see if they have blown or tripped.
- If your neighbors also do not have power, call **Ouachita Electric at (844) 326-4624** to report the outage.
- Unplug major electronics such as televisions and computers. This will help eliminate damage from voltage surges when the electricity is restored.
- Wait a few minutes before turning on these items once power is restored. This will reduce demand on the electric cooperative's power grid.
- If you use a standby generator, be sure it has been installed and wired properly. If improperly installed, a generator could cause dangerous conditions for utility employees working to restore power.
- Keep refrigerator and freezer doors closed. An unopened refrigerator can keep food cold for about four hours; a full freezer will maintain temperature for about 48 hours.
- Use flashlights instead of candles. Candles can pose a fire hazard, especially during stressful situations.
- Avoid opening exterior doors frequently. This helps maintain your home's indoor temperature.
- Stay updated through your local electric cooperative's outage map or text alerts if available.
- Check on elderly or vulnerable neighbors. They may need assistance with medical devices, mobility or communication.

### **Winter power outages:**

- Dress warmly. Several layers of clothing provide better insulation than a single layer of heavier clothing.
- Move to a single room, preferably one with few windows. Ideally, this room should be on the south side of the home for maximum heat gain in the daytime. The room should also be shut off from the rest of the house.
- If you use an alternate heat source, be sure and follow operating instructions.
  - A small stream of water can be left on to prevent water pipes from freezing.
  - Use towels or blankets to block drafts around

windows and doors to retain heat.

- Eat and drink regularly. Food provides energy your body uses to stay warm; warm (nonalcoholic) drinks can also help.
- Avoid overexertion. Activities like shoveling snow can put extra strain on your heart in cold conditions.
- Never use outdoor heating devices indoors. Grills, camp stoves or propane heaters can produce deadly carbon monoxide.
- If the home becomes too cold, consider relocating to a friend's house, warming center or shelter, if travel conditions are safe.

### **Prepare an emergency kit with:**

- Flashlights with fresh batteries.
- First aid kit, prescription medicines and baby supplies.
- Nonperishable food and a manual can opener.
- Pet food and supplies.
- A fully charged cellphone and battery pack.
- Bottled drinking water.
- Battery-powered emergency lights and radio.
- Backup power sources for necessary medical equipment.

For more tips, visit [safeelectricity.org](http://safeelectricity.org).



### **Generate Safely.**

**Never use a portable generator indoors.**

**Do not plug generators into standard electrical outlets.**

**Use heavy-duty extension cords to connect appliances into the generator.**

**Start the generator before connecting appliances.**

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- If your neighbors have electricity, the problem could be inside your home. Check your main fuses or circuit breakers to see if they have blown or tripped.
- If your neighbors also do not have power, call **Petit Jean Electric at (501) 745-2493** to report the outage.
- Unplug major electronics such as televisions and computers. This will help eliminate damage from voltage surges when the electricity is restored.
- Wait a few minutes before turning on these items once power is restored. This will reduce demand on the electric cooperative's power grid.
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# Why winter bills may spike

While Arkansas has some of the lowest overall energy costs in the nation, here are the four top reasons why you may have a higher-than-average electric bill during winter months.

**1. Consumption** – The more energy your home uses, the higher your bill. Heating and cooling systems use the most energy to keep your home comfortable.

**2. Weather** – Prolonged cold or hot spells can significantly increase energy use.

**3. Energy Costs** – Costs associated with the production of electricity change regularly. You may see a credit or charge each month on your bill, depending on current energy prices and the amount of energy used.

**4. Days in Billing Cycle** – More days in a billing cycle may make your bill seem higher than normal.

For more energy savings tips, visit [aecc.com/energy-efficiency/](http://aecc.com/energy-efficiency/).



ADDRESS  
P.O. Box 37  
270 Quality Drive  
Clinton, AR 72031

CONTACT US  
(501) 745-2493  
(855) 938-3576

PAY BILL  
[pjecc.com](http://pjecc.com)

REPORT OUTAGES  
(855) 938-3576

CONNECT ONLINE  
[pjecc.com](http://pjecc.com)

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Petit Jean Electric  
Cooperative, Inc.

Our offices will  
be closed for  
New Year's Day  
on Thursday,  
Jan. 1.

## LIHEAP

## Heating Assistance Available

The Low-Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP) can help households stay safe and warm by providing help with paying electric bills in winter months to qualifying individuals and families.

Beginning in January, applications are accepted on a first-come, first-served basis, as long as funds are available. Businesses are excluded from receiving the benefit.

For LIHEAP heating assistance and for emergency help to keep the power on, please contact the Community Action Agency for your county ([acaaa.org/local-community-action-agencies/](http://acaaa.org/local-community-action-agencies/)).

Arkansas River Valley Area Council (ARVAC) (479) 219-5292  
Serving Conway County (479) 229-486 and Pope County.

Community Action Program for Central Arkansas (CAPCA) (501) 329-0977  
Serving Cleburne County (877) 699-6924 and Faulkner County (501) 358-8653

Cleburne County Cares (501) 362-8486

Northcentral Arkansas Development Council (NADC) (870) 793-5765  
Serving Stone County

Ozark Opportunities (OO) (870) 741-9406  
Serving Newton County, Searcy County (501) 745-2437, Van Buren County  
(501) 745-2437 and Marion County