



University of California
Cooperative Extension
Tulare County

Agriculture and Natural Resources



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WHAT TO DO DURING A BLACKOUT

If a rolling blackout is implemented in your neighborhood as part of the state's current energy crisis, remember that it is a controlled event. The electricity will come back on within a couple of hours. Any conservation measures that can be implemented during this period will ease the load on the system and minimize the depth and duration of the outages in other parts of the state. Until power is restored, consider these tips.

- Drive carefully. Remember that traffic signals may be out in a rolling blackout. Consider each intersection to be a four-way stop, and drive defensively. If you are a pedestrian, be extra alert, since normal traffic patterns are disrupted.
- Avoid opening your refrigerator and freezer as much as possible. If the doors are not opened food will stay colder inside for a longer period of time. The refrigerator will keep food cold for about eight to ten hours while a freezer will keep most foods frozen or cold for about 48 hours.
- Do not use candles for illumination; these are fire hazards. Use battery flashlights and lamps if necessary.
- If you are in an elevator during an outage, use the emergency phone to notify the building maintenance people of your situation. Remain calm and remember that it is a limited duration event.

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- Check on your elderly neighbors or those who may have medical conditions or use medical machinery that operates on electricity.
- Turn off lights and appliances that may have been on prior to the black out. Leave one light on to indicate when the electricity is back.
- Remind children who are at home alone to remain calm and to turn off the television, computers, or other appliances that were on.

Other summertime energy savers include:

- If you are leaving your home for more than a few hours, set your thermostat four degrees or more higher than normal. Be patient when you return home. Lowering your thermostat setting drastically won't cool your house any faster.
- Try to avoid running your clothes dryer and dishwasher during the heat of the day. Run the appliances at night in possible.
- Use fans where possible.

Between May and October, nearly two thirds of the electricity used in a typical home is consumed by the central air conditioning unit and electric water heater. It makes sense to concentrate energy-saving efforts in those two areas.

Remember energy savers as the summer heats up. Energy conservation combined with energy efficient planning will go a long way in our energy –saving efforts.

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