

FirstEnergy Utilities Offer Tips to Stay Safe and Save Energy During Extreme Cold

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As frigid weather impacts the region, FirstEnergy Corp. (NYSE: FE) utilities remind customers of steps they can take to stay safe and better manage energy bills that may climb as a result of the cold weather. Based on current forecasts, all of FirstEnergy's six-state footprint will be affected by the cold snap, with sub-zero temperatures and snow likely to arrive later today.

Company line workers also will be ready to assist should the arctic conditions cause any customers to lose power. A video playlist of utility personnel discussing winter power restoration activities is available on [YouTube](#).

"Our electric system is designed and maintained to operate safely and effectively on extremely cold days that create high demand for electricity," said Samuel Belcher, senior vice president of FirstEnergy and president of FirstEnergy Utilities. "In addition, our line crews are trained to safely make repairs in all weather conditions in the event a power outage occurs."

Customers should review important winter safety information and prepare in case weather-related outages do occur. Frigid temperatures also can increase energy bills for those who use electric heat sources, such as space heaters, heat pumps and electric furnaces.

Safety Tips:

- Heating appliances, such as space heaters and electric blankets, should never be left unattended or used while sleeping.
- Never fold an electric blanket while it is in use. This can damage wires inside of the blanket, causing it to overheat or spark.
- Only use space heaters designed for indoor use. Keep all heat sources at least three feet away from curtains, carpet or furniture that could catch on fire.
- Never use a gas stove, charcoal grill or lantern intended for outdoor use inside your home because it could lead to a buildup of deadly carbon monoxide gas.
- When operating a portable generator, place it outside of your home and far away from windows, doors and vents. Never use a generator inside your home!
- Keep electronic devices, such as cell phones, laptops and tablet computers, fully charged to be ready for an emergency.
- Have a flashlight, portable radio and extra batteries handy in the event a power outage occurs.

Energy-Saving Tips:

- Make sure your home is properly insulated to help reduce heat loss. Inspect doors and windows and apply caulk or weather stripping where necessary to keep cold air out. Close drapes, blinds and garage doors to retain heat.
- Keep your thermostat at a temperature where you feel comfortable. Each degree lower has the potential to save about 2 percent on your heating bill. Install a programmable thermostat and it will do the work for you.
- Schedule an annual furnace inspection and tune-up by a qualified and experienced HVAC professional.
- Clean or replace the furnace filter to improve efficiency.
- Keep furniture and drapes from blocking heat registers and return vents to ensure heat can get into the room.
- Close the vents in rooms that are not being used.
- Avoid frozen pipes by opening faucets and maintaining a constant drip, or wrap pipes in insulation or layers of newspapers

Employee Safety Procedures:

FirstEnergy utilities are reviewing staffing levels and cold weather operational procedures to ensure any potential localized power outages caused by the excessive cold are handled promptly.

Company employees, including line workers, substation electricians and meter readers, also are receiving briefings about what steps they can take to stay safe on the job when the temperatures drop below freezing. Company personnel often take extra measures to stay warm when working in extreme cold to restore power after an outage, such as taking more frequent, short breaks to stay warm and change into dry clothing.

Customer Communications Options:

If winter weather does cause an outage, customers who are without power should call 1-888-LIGHTSS (1-888-544-4877) to report their outage or click the "Report Outage" link on www.firstenergycorp.com.

Customers should never go near a downed power line, even if they think it is no longer carrying electricity. Extra caution should be used in areas where downed lines are tangled in trees or other debris. Motorists are cautioned to treat intersections with inoperable traffic signals as four-way stops.

FirstEnergy customers also can subscribe to email and text message alert notifications to receive weather alerts in advance of major storms, and updates on scheduled or extended power outages. Customers can also use two-way text messaging to report outages, request updates on restoration efforts, and make other inquiries about their electric accounts. More information about these communications tools is available online at www.firstenergycorp.com/connect.

FirstEnergy is dedicated to safety, reliability and operational excellence. Its 10 electric distribution companies form one of the nation's largest investor-owned electric systems, serving customers in Ohio, Pennsylvania, New Jersey, West Virginia, Maryland and New York. The company's transmission subsidiaries operate more than 24,000 miles of transmission lines that connect the Midwest and Mid-Atlantic regions. Visit FirstEnergy online at www.firstenergycorp.com and Follow FirstEnergy and its operating companies on Twitter [@FirstEnergyCorp](https://twitter.com/FirstEnergyCorp), [@ToledoEdison](https://twitter.com/ToledoEdison), [@IlluminatingCo](https://twitter.com/IlluminatingCo), [@OhioEdison](https://twitter.com/OhioEdison), [@MonPowerWV](https://twitter.com/MonPowerWV), [@JCP L](https://twitter.com/JCP_L), [@Penn Power](https://twitter.com/Penn Power), [@Penelec](https://twitter.com/Penelec), [@Met Ed](https://twitter.com/Met Ed), [@PotomacEdison](https://twitter.com/PotomacEdison), [@W Penn Power](https://twitter.com/W Penn Power).