

01 / BEFORE THE EVENT

Extreme heat

Know where to cool down before you need to.

Cooling access, household check-ins and the warning signs that should never wait for power to return.

ACT FIRST Confusion, fainting or loss of consciousness during extreme heat can indicate a medical emergency. Call 911 in the U.S. or Canada, or your local emergency number elsewhere. Move the person to a cooler place and begin cooling with water or cool wet cloths while waiting for help. Do not give fluids to an unconscious or confused person. [2, 3]

Identify a cooled destination

Find an air-conditioned place you can reach, such as an announced cooling centre or an accessible public building. Check that it is open, has power and can meet your household needs. Arrange transport and a backup destination. [1, 3]

Arrange real check-ins

Agree who will check on older adults, people living alone and anyone with health or mobility needs. Health Canada notes that a visit can reveal signs that may be missed by phone. Keep transport fueled or charged. [3]

Ask about individual health needs early

If a clinician has restricted fluid intake, ask how to manage heat rather than simply drinking more. Discuss medicine storage and heat-related concerns with a pharmacist or care provider before the hot period. [1]

U.S. and Canadian sources. Apply current local instructions wherever you live. This guide is not a live alert service or an official agency publication.

02 / DURING AND AFTER

When conditions change

DURING THE EVENT

Reduce heat exposure and workload

Move strenuous activities to a cooler time or cancel them. Wear light, loose clothing, drink water regularly unless advised otherwise, and use a cool shower or wet cloths. Spend time in a genuinely cooler location. [1]

Act before the home becomes intolerable

If cooling fails, use the transport and destination you arranged. Do not rely on a fan alone in very hot conditions. Never leave a child, a dependent person or a pet in a parked vehicle, even briefly. [1, 3]

AFTER THE IMMEDIATE THREAT

Keep checking after power returns

Confirm that the cooling equipment is actually working and that rooms are cooling before returning a vulnerable person. Continue local heat alerts and check-ins; restored electricity does not instantly remove accumulated heat. [1, 3]

Check food instead of guessing

Keep refrigerator and freezer doors closed during an outage. Use a thermometer and the official food-safety chart after the interruption. Never taste food to decide whether it is safe. [4]

For suspected heat stroke, follow emergency-dispatch instructions. Do not give fluids to an unconscious or confused person. [2]

03 / DETAILS WORTH KNOWING

Small details. Better decisions.

Heat stroke does not require dry skin

NWS lists hot skin that may be dry or damp among heat-stroke signs. Sweating does not rule it out. Confusion or loss of consciousness during heat calls for emergency help, not a wait-and-see approach. [2]

A fan is not proof that a room is safe

A fan moves air but does not provide the same cooling as air conditioning. NWS cautions about fan use in very hot rooms. Prioritize an accessible cooled place rather than using a running fan as your safety test. [1]

Where backup power fits

Air conditioning can require far more power than phones or lights, and compressors may need extra starting power. Check the exact equipment and backup system together. Illustrative energy example: a constant 800 W load needs 3,200 Wh for four hours before losses. Do not treat a small power bank as a cooling plan.

Try this before you need it

Confirm your cooled destination by phone while everything is working. Record opening hours, accessibility, pet arrangements and the transport contact. Decide who checks it again during an outage.

Local context: Canada

Health Canada and local public-health units provide heat advice. Cooling-centre hours and accessibility are local details that must be checked when needed. Elsewhere, use your own health authority and emergency number.

04 / YOUR HOUSEHOLD ACTION CARD

Write it down. Keep it handy.

Complete this page before an emergency. Review when your household, equipment or local instructions change.

Cooled destination / opening hours

Backup destination / transport contact

People to check on / time agreed

Care provider / individual heat instructions

Cooling equipment / outage fallback

READY CHECK

- ☐ Cooled destination and transport checked
- ☐ Check-ins arranged for vulnerable people
- ☐ Individual fluid and medicine advice reviewed
- ☐ Everyone knows emergency heat warning signs
- ☐ Food thermometer and outage guidance ready

SOURCES / Numbers refer to the actions in this guide

1. [NOAA / NWS - During a heat wave](#)
2. [NOAA / NWS - Heat illness: warning signs and first aid](#)
3. [Health Canada - Protect yourself from extreme heat](#)
4. [FoodSafety.gov - Food safety during a power outage](#)

Original summaries and planning prompts by StillPower Guide, operated by Mihai Florea. Sources checked October 24, 2026. No agency endorsement. The linked sources provide fuller guidance.