



Extreme Cold Weather Preparedness

BEFORE a severe cold event:

- Insulate pipes to prevent freezing and bursting.
- Seal air leaks around pipes and any gaps around floor ducts, windows and doors, chimneys and unfinished spaces behind cupboards and closets.
- Test heating systems, including the emergency/ auxiliary heat function, and ensure they are working properly.
- If your home uses a heat pump, its efficiency decreases when temperatures drop below 40. During cold weather, a heat pump will often have to rely on auxiliary (or emergency) heat. This setting uses 3x the electricity as a heat pump.
- Keep extra blankets and warm clothing available.
- Trim trees and remove dead branches that could fall on power lines.
- Replace air filters regularly to keep your HVAC system running as efficiently as possible during cold weather.
- Remove, drain and store outdoor hoses. Consider using protective covers on spigots to prevent freezing.
- Gather water, food and medicine before a winter storm in case it becomes unsafe to travel.
- If you must get out, have emergency supplies in your vehicle like a blanket, first aid kit, boots and warm clothing

DURING a severe cold event:

- Keep indoor temperatures above 55°F to prevent pipes from freezing.
- Close crawlspace vents to keep cold air out.
- MTE recommends setting your thermostat to 68 degrees, or as low as you can while staying comfortable.
- Remember: You can expect to add 3% to your electric bill for each degree above 68.

- Keep your fireplace damper closed when not in use to prevent warm air from escaping your home.
- Run ceiling fans clockwise and at the lowest speed to help push warm air down.
- Open kitchen and bathroom cabinet doors to allow warmer air to circulate around plumbing, especially for plumbing located on exterior walls.
- When temperatures are below freezing for prolonged periods of time, consider dripping your faucets to reduce pressure and help prevent freezing pipes.
- Drip any faucet on exterior walls.
- Drip the faucet furthest from where water enters your home.
- Use space heaters sparingly, if possible, as they can lead to significant energy consumption. Always plug them directly into the wall and not a power strip. Be sure they aren't near curtains or other flammable materials.

AFTER a severe cold event:

- Inspect electrical systems for damage.
- Check for ice accumulation on power lines and poles.
- Keep people and pets at least 30 feet away from downed power lines. Don't touch anything in contact with a downed line, such as a car, tree or fence. Please report a downed line to MTE immediately by calling 877-777-9020.
- Report any power outages to MTE via the myMTE app or by calling 877-777-0215.
- If you do lose power, keep your refrigerator and freezer closed to preserve food. According to the US Department of Agriculture, food in the fridge will last up to four hours, and a full freezer will be safe for 48 hours.
- If needed due to outages, use generators safely:
- Never operate indoors or in enclosed spaces.
- Keep it dry and out of rain or wet conditions. Operate it on a dry surface under an open canopy-like structure.
- Let it cool down before refueling.
- Only a qualified, licensed electrician should attempt to connect a generator to your main electric panel. If connected improperly, power can "backfeed" onto utility lines, creating a dangerous situation for line crews.