Electrical Outages & Home Safety PREPAREDNESS

IF THE POWER GOES OUT:

- ☐ **Check your fuse or breaker box** for blown fuses or tripped circuits. If they are okay, see if neighbors are without power.
- ☐ **Call your utility** immediately. You may be asked for information, or hear a message if the situation has already been reported. **9-1-1 is for reporting emergencies ONLY.**
- ☐ **Turn off** all electrical equipment to prevent overloading the system when power is restored.
- ☐ **Turn on** a porch light and one inside light so you and utility crews will know when service is restored.
- ☐ **Listen to the radio** (battery-powered) for updates on major electrical outages.
- ☐ If your neighbors' power comes back on, but yours does not, call your utility company again.

Important Information when Reporting a Power Outage

- Name, address and cross street
- Time of outage
- Are lights out, flickering or dim?
- Are the neighbors' lights out?
- Have any wires fallen to the ground?
- Tree limbs on lines?
- Utility pole number?

EMERGENCY LIGHTING:

Flashlights: Each person should have their own flashlight. Store extra bulbs and batteries.

Light-sticks: Self-contained chemical lights that are activated by bending. Work well as night-lights for children.

Candles: Can be dangerous

DOWNED UTILITY LINES

If you see any wire lying on the ground (or dangling in the air) don't touch it with anything - stay back. Call your utility company immediately. Keep kids and pets away.

NEVER touch a downed wire. Electricity can travel through your body causing serious injury or death. If you see a downed line take these precautions:

Expect every wire/line to be "live". The line does not have to spark or sizzle to carry electricity. Cable, phone and alarm lines may be ELECTRIFIED. Do not touch.

If a power line is touching someone stay away - you cannot help. If you touch the person, you could become a victim too.

Call 9-1-1 for emergency help.

If a utility line falls across your vehicle, don't get out! Wait for emergency help to arrive.

Never touch metal (like fences or guard rails) that have a wire laying on it. It may be electrified.

Emergency Kit
Check list

- ☐ Flashlights or chemical light-sticks
- ☐ Battery-powered radio
- ☐ Paper plates/ plastic utensils
- ☐ Manual can opener
- ☐ Bottled drinking water
- ☐ First aid kit
- ☐ Extra batteries
- ☐ Battery or wind-up alarm clock

STAYING WARM:

Outages can occur at any time of year, but during cold weather the temperature inside your home can drop rapidly. Tips for staying warm:

Save Body Heat - Wear a hat, even while sleeping. Wear loose layers of clothing to trap body heat. Use blankets.

Lock in Home Heat - Pick one room (on a sunny side of the house) and close it off to keep the heat in.

Who to call to report a power outage in Bergen County:

PSE & G 800-436-7734
Rockland Electric 877-434-4100

Remember: Utility crews may have to remove limbs, replace parts, close circuit breakers. The more serious the problem, the longer it will take to restore customer service

HOUSEHOLD TIPS:

Your **Freezer** will keep food frozen during an outage for about two days if it's full; one day if it's less than half-full. Don't open the door.

Protect your pipes: If the power is out and the weather is freezing, keep a steady drip of cold water on an inside faucet and wrap pipes to prevent damage.

Automatic Garage Door Openers won't work if the power is out. Check to see if you have a manual override.

Home Computers: Install a surge protector (not just a power strip) to protect your computer from power surges.

Charcoal or propane grills: NEVER use a cooking device designed for outdoors inside the home. They produce carbon monoxide which can be deadly.

Cordless phones won't work if the power is out. Have a backup phone that does not need electricity to work.

Generators: Never connect a home generator to a wall outlet. If used incorrectly, portable or auxiliary generators used for backup power at home can ruin your electrical system and start a fire. They can also feed electricity back into the utility system. This is very dangerous for crews repairing lines.

Home generators should be installed by a licensed electrical contractor. Generators installed in accordance with electrical safety codes, require an electrical permit and an electrical inspection.

Improperly installed or improperly used generators pose a serious - sometimes fatal - risk to homeowners and utility workers.

Bergen County Office of Emergency Management
201-785-5757 or www.bcoem.org