



Power Outage Concerns

From the Branch-Hillsdale-St. Joseph Community Health Agency

First Aid for Electrical Shock

If you believe someone has been electrocuted take the following steps:

1. Look first. Don't touch. The person may still be in contact with the electrical source. Touching the person may pass the current through you.
2. Call or have someone else call 911 or emergency medical help.
3. Turn off the source of electricity if possible. If not, move the source away from you and the affected person using a nonconducting object made of cardboard, plastic or wood.
4. Once the person is free of the source of electricity, check the person's breathing and pulse. If either has stopped or seems dangerously slow or shallow, begin cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR) immediately.
5. If the person is faint or pale or shows other signs of shock, lay the person down with the head slightly lower than the trunk of his or her body and the legs elevated.
6. Don't touch burns, break blisters, or remove burned clothing. Electrical shock may cause burns inside the body, so be sure the person is taken to a doctor.

Power Line Hazards and Cars

If a power line falls on a car, you should stay inside the vehicle. This is the safest place to stay. Warn people not to touch the car or the line. Call or ask someone to call the local utility company and emergency services. The only circumstance in which you should consider leaving a car that is in contact with a downed power line is if the vehicle catches on fire. Open the door. Do not step out of the car. You may receive a shock. Instead, jump free of the car so that your body clears the vehicle before touching the ground. Once you clear the car, shuffle at least 50 feet away, with both feet on the ground.

As in all power line related emergencies, call for help immediately by dialing 911 or call your electric utility company's Service Center/Dispatch Office.

Do not try to help someone else from the car while you are standing on the ground.

Safety at Work During Power Recovery

As power returns after an outage, people at work may be at risk of electrical or traumatic injuries as power lines are reenergized and equipment is reactivated. CDC recommends that employers and employees be aware of those risks and take protective steps if they are in contact with or in proximity to power lines, electrical components, and the moving parts of heavy machinery.

Be Prepared for an Emergency

CDC recommends that people make an emergency plan that includes a disaster supply kit. This kit should include enough water, dried and canned food, and emergency supplies (flashlights, batteries, first-aid supplies, prescription medicines, and a digital thermometer) to last at least 3 days. Use battery-powered flashlights and lanterns, rather than candles, gas lanterns, or torches (to minimize the risk of fire).

The Branch-Hillsdale-St. Joseph Community Health Agency

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