



Power outages pose a threat to both public safety and research. It is important to plan ahead in case the power supply on campus is disrupted. By being prepared, you can prevent injury to yourself or your co-workers, and prevent damage to university facilities and equipment. Personnel working within offices and laboratories located in the center of buildings without outside windows, are particularly vulnerable as well as in those buildings without emergency backup power.

Prepare:

- Make sure flashlights or battery-operated light sources are readily available and that all employees know where they are located.
- Departments may consider installing battery-operated emergency lighting in interior offices and labs.

General:

- Shut off computer equipment, printers, copy machines and other electronic equipment. There may be a power surge when the power is restored that could damage electrical equipment left in the "on" position.
- During outside temperature extremes, keep windows closed as much as possible to maintain a comfortable indoor temperature. If the outside temperatures are mild, opening outside windows (where available) and doors will help.

In laboratories:

- Stop work and close, cover or otherwise contain and secure the materials you are using.
- Stop work in fumehoods or biosafety cabinets as soon as possible and close the sash, even if the hood appears to be working.
- Make sure cabinet doors and flammable storage cabinets are secure.
- If you are working with materials at reduced or increased temperature or pressure, know the steps to safely relieve or maintain the system to prevent an uncontrolled reaction or release.
- Avoid opening refrigerators or freezers. The internal temperature will be maintained longer if the doors are kept closed.

Animal facilities:

- Animal care staff working in windowless areas should have access to flashlights at all times.
- Surgical facilities should have enough battery powered lights to be able to finish up a surgery without power.
- If you have animals housed in ventilated racks, you should know what will happen to the animals if there is no power and be prepared to deal with the situation.

For all departments:

- Some campus buildings have emergency generators. These generators will come on automatically in the event of a power failure. However, the generators are designed to operate only specific equipment and not to maintain normal operation of the building. Some buildings have special outlets for critical equipment that will be powered by a generator.
- If you feel you have equipment or processes that will cause a hazard in the event of a power outage, try to determine if there is emergency power available or contact Facilities Services (541-737-2969) for assistance.
- If the power goes out, campus administrators will do their best to provide as much information as possible, however specific information as to when the power may be restored may not always be provided to university officials by the utility operators.
- The decision whether or not to release employees during a power outage is up to the management of each individual department. However, if the building is unsafe to occupy from either a hazardous atmosphere or the absence of an operable fire alarm system, then all occupants must leave the building.

Contact EHS:
safety@oregonstate.edu
oregonstate.edu/ehs/
541 • 737 • 2273

Preparing for power outages is the responsibility of your department. Faculty and staff should work with department chairs to identify critical processes and equipment that will need emergency power and incorporate provisions to accomplish this within the department's disaster recovery plan.

For additional information or assistance with developing your disaster recovery plan, contact EH&S at 541-737-2273 or Public Safety at 737-3010.