

Keep your food safe during long outages

Flicker, flicker, flicker — dark! The lights have just gone off, and the search for candles and matches has begun. But even if you can see by candlepower, there are other dangers lurking in the dark that you can't see: bacteria that will begin growing in perishable foods when the electricity is off.

During the summer, severe storms can wreak havoc with power lines and equipment, and storing food safely becomes a challenge if the power goes off. The U.S. Food and Drug Administration recommends these steps to follow:

Before an outage

- Keep refrigerator at 40 degrees or below. Freeze items like fresh meat and poultry that you won't use immediately.
- Keep freezer set to 0 degrees or below. Group frozen foods to help items stay colder longer.
- If you anticipate an extended power outage, buy dry or block ice to keep the fridge and/or freezer cold.

During an outage

- Keep the refrigerator and freezer doors closed! If the doors stay closed during the length of the outage, a full freezer will hold its temperature for 48 hours; a refrigerator will keep food safe for four hours.

After an outage

- Check the temperature inside your refrigerator and/or freezer. If the temperatures are safe, the food should be safe to eat.

For more recommendations, visit www.fda.gov and search for power outage safety.

ENERGY

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heat, including natural gas, steam and coal. Regardless of the fuel type, Seminole's goal is to maximize the amount of heat generated using the least amount of fuel. The less fuel needed to generate electricity, the cheaper the energy provided to members.

Clay and Seminole also look to new technology to explore more energy efficiency. For example, smart thermostats can help you save money on your electric bill by controlling the temperature throughout the day in your home. Smart thermostats are now being accessed by power providers to make community-wide temporary setting adjustments on the hottest and coolest days of the year. This helps to offset the demand for electricity.

Seminole and its members are currently exploring other new technologies to make further energy efficiency improvements.

The more we can conserve the use of energy, the more we all save.

Capital Credits lookup tool available

Members who leave the co-op's service territory have a new way to ensure they receive future Capital Credits. Former members can check for unclaimed Capital Credits at capitalcredits.clayelectric.com. To use the tool, the following must be provided: either the last name the account was in and the last four digits of the person's social security number; the account number; or the full name the account was in and the address where power was received.

Power Line is an informational publication of Clay Electric Cooperative, Inc. It is distributed monthly with members' billing statements. If you have questions or comments about Power Line, write Editor Justin Caudell at P.O. Box 308, Keystone Heights, FL 32656; or email: jcaudell@clayelectric.com. Clay Electric's Board of Trustees will meet on Thursday, July 25 beginning at noon in Keystone Heights.

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The Clay Electric Cooperative, Inc. _____

Power Line

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Efficiency at plant helps us all save

Whether it's installing a smart thermostat in your home or replacing your lights with LED bulbs, Clay Electric encourages its members to conserve energy in all different ways. Even closing the window shades on the sunny side of your home this summer can help lower your energy use.

It's important to remember, energy efficiency isn't only at the consumer level — your electric cooperative practices energy efficiency at our offices, and so does Seminole Electric Cooperative, Clay Electric's wholesale energy provider.



Seminole owns and operates power plants on behalf of its nine member distribution electric cooperatives. The more efficiently Seminole's facilities can run, the more energy can be delivered to the end consumer at a lower cost. This is why Seminole is committed to constantly improving the efficiency of its plants and other facilities.

A power plant, at its simplest, uses heat to generate electricity. Plants use many different types of fuel to generate

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 **Clay Electric Cooperative, Inc.**
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Storm Season

What to do before, during and after a hurricane strikes

Hurricane season is here, but it's not too late to update emergency plans and phone lists and restock supply kits.

These tips will help your family prepare for a storm. For a complete hurricane guide and more helpful information, visit clayelectric.com/reliability-restoration/storm-center

WHAT TO DO WELL AHEAD OF THE STORM

- Discuss the types of hazards that could affect your family. Know your home's vulnerability to storm surge, flooding and wind.
- Locate a safe room or the safest areas in your home for each hurricane hazard. In certain circumstances, the safest areas may not be your home but within the community.
- Determine escape routes and places to meet. These should be measured in tens of miles, not hundreds of miles.
- Have an out-of-state friend as a family contact.
- Have a plan for pets in case an evacuation is ordered.
- Keep emergency telephone numbers by the phone; make sure children know how and when to call 911.
- Check insurance coverage — flood damage is not usually covered by homeowners insurance.
- Stock non-perishable emergency supplies and a Disaster Supply Kit.
- Make sure you have a NOAA weather radio, and remember to replace its battery every six months.
- Take first aid, CPR and disaster preparedness classes.
- Trim trees and shrubs. Make sure debris is cleared prior to a hurricane warning announcement when trash pickup is suspended.

Note: Do not attempt to trim any vegetation growing on or near any overhead power lines. Only specially trained line-clearing professionals should do so.

- Make plans to secure property. Permanent storm shutters offer the best protection for windows. Another option: Board up.
- Install straps or additional clips to securely fasten the roof to the frame structure. This will reduce roof damage.
- Clear loose and clogged rain gutters and downspouts.

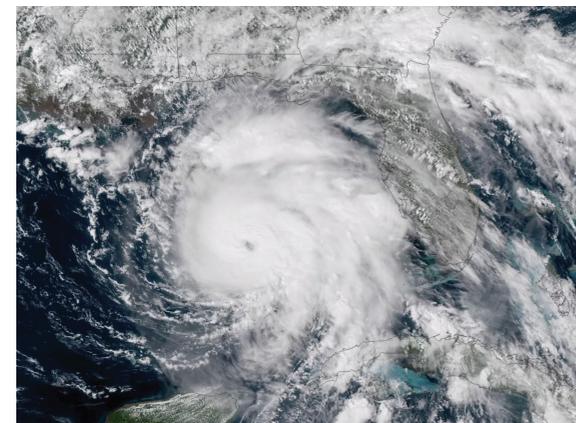
WHAT TO DO WHEN THE STORM IS COMING

Here's a list compiled from several sources:

- Most important: Listen to the radio or TV for information.
- If someone in your home depends on electric-powered, life-sustaining equipment, review your family emergency plan for backup power or make arrangements to evacuate.
- Before lowering a TV antenna or satellite dish, make sure to turn off and unplug the TV and avoid power lines.
- Turn off all swimming pool pumps and filters and wrap them in waterproof materials.
- Turn off and unplug any unnecessary electrical equipment.
- Secure your home, close storm shutters, secure outdoor objects or bring them indoors.
- Turn off utilities if instructed to do so. Otherwise, turn the refrigerator and freezer to the coldest settings ahead of time to keep food fresh longer in the event of a power outage.
- Turn off propane tanks.
- Avoid using the phone, except for serious emergencies.
- Ensure a supply of water for sanitary purposes, such as cleaning and flushing toilets. Fill the bathtub and other large containers with water.

What to do during the storm

- Go to your safe room — a small interior room, closet or hallway on the lowest level.
- Stay indoors, away from windows & glass doors.



- Close all interior doors. Secure and brace all external doors.
- Keep curtains and blinds closed. Remember that a "lull" might be the eye of the storm; winds could pick up again.
- If the roof begins to leak or rain blows in around doors and windows, do not go outside to repair damage during the storm.

AFTER THE STORM

- Watch for downed power lines that are still live.
- Don't strike matches until you are sure no gas is leaking.
- Look out for broken glass, nails and other sharp debris.
- Snakes and other dangerous animals could be on the loose.
- Do not use water until the local water utility, through the media, says it is safe to do so. Use only bottled or disinfected water.
- If your home is damaged, be aware that it still may collapse.
- Be on the lookout for possible looters.
- Avoid driving: Roads may be littered with debris and traffic lights may not be working.