

## How To Keep Warm With No Electricity

Billie Nicholson

7 “C’s” for Keeping Warm - Last month’s article on [preparing your home for winter](#) reminded us of the importance of repairing doors and windows to eliminate drafts. Now we’ll address ways to stay warm during an extended electrical power outage where no generator is available.

1. **Conserve** heat by bringing everyone into one room, preferably a small one. Add rugs to the floor, cover interior doorways with blankets and windows with shower curtains (lets daylight in to allow solar heating during the day.) Avoid opening and closing exterior doors. Go out through a porch or garage that can act like an air lock.
2. **Clothing** - Dress in multiple layers to minimize body heat loss. Hats, gloves or mittens, and warm socks should be included. Several thin layers work better to hold body heat.
3. **Chimney** - Hopefully that small room has access to a fireplace or wood burning stove. Stoves are 70% more efficient than fireplaces for severe weather because there are more surface areas from which the heat can radiate. Some [propane heaters](#), or [kerosene heaters](#), which are approved for indoor use, can also be used. (Be sure to keep a carbon monoxide detector and a fire extinguisher handy.)
4. **Calorie-dense** food will provide the extra energy needed to keep warm. Eating stimulates the metabolism, too. Be sure to drink plenty of liquids to stay hydrated. Warm drinks or soups held in cups also serve as hand warmers. Avoid alcohol. That “warm feeling” is not a metabolism booster and can do more harm than good.
5. **Cuddling** is a great way to share body heat. Bring out the sleeping bags and set up your tent. The kids will love it and you’ll all stay warmer if you sleep inside it. Pets make great bed warmers, too.
6. **Chemical** hand warmers can be used in gloves, pockets and shoes to keep extremities warm. Hands & feet are the first body parts to suffer.
7. Your **Car** can be a refuge. Start it and run the heater to warm up. Only do this with the garage door open enough for ventilation. Hope you keep your gas tank more than half full.

### Ask Billie



#### Theresa from MA Asks:

Can a SUN OVEN® be used in the winter?

A. Yes. A SUN OVEN® can be used on a clear winter day. SUN OVENS® are frequently used by ice fishermen and at the base camp of a Mt. Everest expedition, where the temperatures are often well below zero. There are more cooking hours available in the summer than in the winter. In the summer, it is not unusual to cook from 8:00 AM to 6:00 PM, whereas during the early winter, effective cooking is limited to 10:00AM to 3:00 PM.

What is your Most Burning Question about Food Storage or Emergency Preparedness? Send your questions to [editor@sunoven.com](mailto:editor@sunoven.com)



Billie Nicholson



Order Your Sun Oven® Today

## Meals Without Power



[Wikipedia](#)

About the time you decide how to keep your family warm without electricity, stomachs will begin to growl. What to do and how?

- Deal with water first. Now you get to use that stored water you've put aside. When the power goes off, you may lose access to well water (pumps are electric) or city water if the water treatment plant's power goes down too. If you

suspect that the power will fail, draw a bath tub full of water. There is even a [waterBOB](#) made of food grade plastic available that will hold 100 gallons, fit into your tub, and is around \$25. Water can stay fresh and clean inside this for up to 16 weeks. It comes with all the necessary accessories to connect to the tub and a siphon pump to transfer water to pitchers or jugs. It takes about 20 minutes to fill. Keeping hydrated is critical to survival in hot or cold weather. Drinking water minimizes hunger pains.

- This will be the time you're glad that you have food storage. But before you run to the pantry, think about what's in your refrigerator that is perishable. Eat that first. To make perishables last longer, limit the number of times you open the refrigerator door. Putting everything close together will minimize heat gain. Add frozen water bottles to refrigerated section.
- Store foods that don't require refrigeration. Canned meats, fish, soups, vegetables, and juices can be kept for months. Crackers, cookies and snacks don't last as long because the oils in them go rancid after a couple of months. Daisy Luther at [The Organic Prepper](#) has a great list of no cook items to store for power-outage days.
- When the sun is shining, set up your [SunOven®](#) outdoors to cook those perishables or bake an entire meal. On a cloudy or rainy day, use the [Cloudy Day Cube Stove](#). These are both designed for quick, convenient set up. They can be used to cook a variety of foods from reheating to longer time slow cooking. Cook with the Cube under cover if it is raining, but not indoors.
- Using a grill is a great option during an electric outage; however NEVER, NEVER use a grill inside. Carbon Monoxide is a byproduct of burning charcoal or propane and is deadly in enclosed spaces. Gas or charcoal grills can be used to heat bricks or even rocks to bring localized warmth into a home. Handle them carefully and wrap them in a towel. They'll hold warmth a long time.
- Use the flat surface of your wood stove, if you have one, to heat up food. Pay attention and stir frequently to avoid sticking or burning. Use a potholder when handling cooking utensils.

## Getting Ready for an Ice Storm

Winter storms, especially ice storms, frequently result in power outages because the weight of ice on trees and wires result in limbs breaking, whole trees falling over, and wires being over weighted by the ice. Now is the time to prepare for an unexpected power outage due to ice storms. Take the following measures to keep you and your family safe.



[Wikipedia](#)

### **Before the Storm**

- Stock up on food and water essentials. Include non-food items like toilet paper and disposable diapers.
- Get several flashlights or camping lanterns and lots of corresponding batteries. Solar lights (yard lights make great night lights for the bathroom) can be used to help maneuver in the dark.
- You will need a way to monitor the weather. Get a battery operated or hand-crank radio tuned to the emergency weather channel in your area. Remember extra batteries.
- Keep your cellular phone and other electronics you may use for communication charged. To conserve their power, keep them turned off except when you're using them. Buying a car charger for your phone will give you an opportunity to recharge it as needed. Texting uses less power.
- Before the storm season begins in your area, walk around your property looking for tree limbs hanging over power lines which may fall, cutting off power. Have them trimmed to reduce the chance that your limb is the one responsible for causing the power outage in your neighborhood.

### **When the Storm is Approaching**

- Fill up your car's fuel tank. Don't let it get below 1/2 full ever. Remember that gas stations may lose electrical power and be unable to pump gas during a winter storm.
- Walk around your property looking for any items that could get destroyed, damaged or trip you when getting around outside and put them in storage.

### **During an Ice Storm**

- Stay home. Do not even go outside to the mailbox. Icy sidewalks can be the site for a major hip breaking fall. Rescue squads will be slow arriving.
- When the power goes out, telephone your local utility company to report the outage. The phone number should be located on your bill or in the telephone directory. Unless there is someone injured or there are power lines down in your neighborhood, do not the overloaded call 9-1-1.
- To make sure your water pipes don't freeze, run a small stream of water from the faucets.
- If you have a generator, do not connect it directly to your house without the proper connections made by an electrician. Taking your house off the city's system will prevent the power you generate from creating "feedback" into utility lines and perhaps injuring or killing someone working to repair the line. Plug all necessary appliances directly into the generator. Heavy duty extension cords will help with this. A freezer stays cold with a 20 minute run every four hours.
- Unplug all appliances, leaving one lamp turned on. This will minimize the risk of a power surge ruining any sensitive appliances. Computers are especially susceptible to this.
- Check on any elderly neighbors. Make sure they are dressed warmly and offer to take them to your house for comfort if you find them in a dangerous situation. If help is refused, call 9-1-1.
- Be aware of the signs of hypothermia.

## Solar BBQ Beef Brisket from Our Solar Chef



*Chipotle pepper gives this brisket a nice smokey flavor and will fill your yard with such an amazing aroma that your neighbors will think you have a BBQ pit.*

### Ingredients

#### For the Barbecue Sauce:

- 1 1/2 cups ketchup
- 1/2 cup packed dark brown sugar
- 1/3 cup water
- 1/4 cup minced onion
- 3 tablespoons cider vinegar
- 3 tablespoons Worcestershire sauce
- 2 chipotle chilies in adobo sauce, finely chopped
- 1 teaspoon garlic powder
- 3/4 teaspoon pepper

#### For the Brisket

- 1/4 cup paprika
- 1 tablespoon chili powder
- 1 tablespoon ground cumin
- 1 tablespoon packed dark brown sugar
- 1 teaspoon cayenne pepper
- 1 teaspoon garlic powder

1 teaspoon pepper

1 (5-pound) beef brisket

### Preparation

Set Sun Oven out to preheat.

In a large pot or roasting pan, combine all the BBQ sauce ingredients. In a small bowl, combine the paprika, chili powder, cumin, brown sugar, cayenne pepper, garlic powder, and pepper. Cut the brisket in two and rub it on all sides with the spice mixture. Place it, fat side up, in the roasting pan with the BBQ sauce. Cover and transfer to the Sun Oven. Cook until the meat is fork tender, 4 to 5 hours. Transfer the meat to a cutting board. Pour the sauce into a large bowl. Remove and discard the excess fat from the brisket. Slice the meat against the grain into 1/4-inch thick slices or use two forks to shred it. Use a spoon to skim the fat off the sauce in the bowl. Combine the meat and sauce in a pot and gently reheat over medium heat. Adjust for salt and serve. If not serving immediately; store the meat and sauce in separate airtight containers and refrigerate until ready to use then reheat gently.

Makes 6 to 8 servings.

## Safety First During a Power Outage

University of Georgia Cooperative Extension Service

Safety is of prime importance in a heating emergency. Your chances of freezing to death in your home are small. Fire, asphyxiation from lack of oxygen and carbon monoxide poisoning are much greater dangers. Carbon monoxide is an invisible, odorless, tasteless gas, but highly poisonous.

### Follow these tips to keep your family safe:

- ✓ Never go near a downed electrical line. Phone your utility company and 9-1-1 to notify authorities.
- ✓ Do not ever operate generators indoors, not even in the garage. Operate them outside and connect them to your appliances via cables. There are also ways to connect them directly to your home's electric system, thereby allowing you to run all your appliances as you usually would. **Ask a professional for guidance, if this is your choice.**
- ✓ Do not burn anything larger than candles inside your home without providing adequate ventilation to the outside. All heaters (except electric) should be vented. Connect the stove pipe to a chimney flue if at all possible. (Many older homes have capped pipe thimbles in rooms once heated by stoves.) Or hook up your stove to the flue entrance of the non-functioning furnace pipe (after removing the pipe). Sometimes a stove pipe can be extended through a window if no other alternative exists. Replace the window glass with a metal sheet, and run the temporary stove pipe through the metal.
- ✓ Do not run emergency stove piping close to flammable materials. Be particularly careful with window-mounted flues. Sashes, curtains and shades are especially flammable.
- ✓ If you use a catalytic or unvented heater, provide plenty of ventilation in the room. Whenever the device is in use, cross ventilate by opening a window an inch on each side of the room. It is better to let in some cold air than to run the risk of carbon monoxide poisoning.
- ✓ Do not burn outdoor barbeque materials such as charcoal briquettes inside, even in a fireplace.
- ✓ Do not try to use bottled gas in natural gas appliances, unless you have converted the appliances for such use. Flues and piping suitable for gas burning appliances may be unsafe for use with higher temperature oil, coal or wood smoke.
- ✓ Designate one person as a fire watch whenever alternative heat sources are used. One person should stay awake to watch for fire and to make sure ventilation is adequate. If the fire watch feels drowsy, it may be a sign of inadequate ventilation. Get everyone in the house out to fresh air immediately. Keep a carbon monoxide monitor close.
- ✓ Keep firefighting materials on hand. These may include dry powder, fire extinguishers, tarps or heavy blankets, sand, salt, baking soda and water.
- ✓ Discuss emergency procedures with all the members of your family. Go over fire fighting techniques like operating a fire extinguisher. Include a home evacuation plan with a meeting place everyone should go to in the case a fire forces you out of your home.



[Wikipedia](#)



[Wikipedia](#)

## “Potty” Needs Without Power

[PrepperHelper.com](http://PrepperHelper.com)



When the electricity is off, most toilets on city water may work for a short while, but wells operated by an electric pump will not. So what happens when the potty won't flush?

If the toilet still empties, you can use it but you will need to manually refill the holding tank after each flush to replace the water that just went down the stool. Carefully remove the tank cover (they are porcelain and can break if dropped) and fill the tank with a bucket or jug full of stored water. To conserve water, don't flush with every urination. "If it's yellow, let it mellow; if it's brown, flush it down."

If you have no water, use a 5 gallon bucket. Line it with a heavy duty trash bag and toss in some kitty litter, sawdust or sand to absorb the liquid and the odor. A little baking soda will help control odor, too. You will need a toilet seat that can fit over the bucket. it will make sitting down much more comfortable. (Camping supply stores offer port-a-pots with chemical gels that absorb odors, and come complete with a seat.)

You do have extra toilet paper, or baby wipes right? If not now will be the time to pull out some old rags to use for wiping.

Use hand sanitizer or baby wipes on hands after each toilet trip. Dry hands to avoid chilling.

Between uses, keep the bucket lid tightly closed. This is the key to disease control!

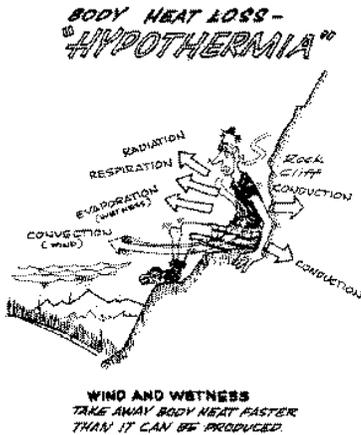
Put some 3% hydrogen peroxide in a small spray bottle and some white distilled vinegar in another one. Spraying these two solutions one after the other will kill most all fecal bacteria on contaminated surfaces.

Replace the liner as needed. Always wear rubber gloves when disposing of human waste. Place it outside, away from your fresh water supply, until it can be disposed of safely.

Skip bathing unless absolutely necessary. Its a good way to get really cold.

## Signs of Hypothermia

[National Institute on Aging](http://www.nia.nih.gov)



If you are like most people, you feel cold every now and then during the winter. What you may not know is that being really cold can make you very sick.

Hypothermia is what happens when your body temperature gets very low. For an older person, a body temperature colder than 95 degrees can cause many health problems, such as a heart attack, kidney problems, liver damage, or worse.

Being outside in the cold, or even being in a very cold house, can lead to hypothermia. You can take steps to lower your

[Hypothermia.org](http://Hypothermia.org)

chance of getting hypothermia. Sometimes it is hard to tell if a person has hypothermia. Look for clues. Is the house very cold? Is the person not dressed for cold weather? Is the person speaking slower than normal and having trouble keeping his or her balance?

Watch for the signs of hypothermia in yourself, too. You might become confused if your body temperature gets very low. Talk to your family and friends about the warning signs so they can look out for you.

### **Warning Signs of Hypothermia**

- cold feet and hands
- puffy or swollen face
- pale skin
- shivering (in some cases the person with hypothermia does not shiver)
- slower than normal speech or slurring words
- acting sleepy
- being angry or confused

### **Later signs of hypothermia**

- moving slowly, trouble walking, or being clumsy
- stiff and jerky arm or leg movements
- slow heartbeat
- slow, shallow breathing
- blacking out or losing consciousness
- call 9-1-1 if you find someone you believe may be suffering from hypothermia

### **Next Steps**

- remove any wet clothes, hats, gloves, shoes and socks
- cover with warm dry clothes and blankets
- move to a warm dry place as soon as possible
- begin rewarming with extra clothing and warm blankets; offer warm liquids - not coffee

## Carbon Monoxide Poisoning

Mayo Clinic

“Carbon monoxide poisoning occurs when carbon monoxide builds up in your bloodstream. When too much carbon monoxide is in the air, your body replaces the oxygen in your red blood cells with carbon monoxide. This prevents oxygen from reaching your tissues and organs. can lead to serious tissue damage, or even death.”

Signs and symptoms of carbon monoxide poisoning may include:

- Dull headache
- Weakness
- Dizziness
- Nausea or vomiting
- Shortness of breath
- Confusion
- Blurred vision
- Loss of consciousness

Carbon monoxide poisoning can be especially dangerous for people who are sleeping or intoxicated. People may have irreversible brain damage or even be killed before anyone realizes there's a problem.

If you or someone you're with develops signs or symptoms of carbon monoxide poisoning — get into fresh air immediately and call 9-1-1 for emergency medical help. A blood test will confirm the presence of carbon monoxide. Treatment may include breathing pure oxygen or spending time in a pressurized oxygen chamber. In it the air pressure is about two to three times higher than normal, which speeds the replacement of carbon monoxide with oxygen in your blood. This treatment helps protect heart and brain tissue, which are particularly vulnerable to injury from carbon monoxide poisoning.

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