72-HOUR BLACK SKY CHECKLIST

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When the grid, the phones, and the payment systems go down at the same time, you have about 72 hours before a bad day becomes a crisis. Print this. Put one copy in the kitchen, one in the car, and one with your documents. Check boxes with a pen.

POWER

- ■ Flashlights for every person, plus extra batteries. No candles alone with kids or pets.
- ■ A battery or hand crank radio that picks up AM, FM, and NOAA weather bands.
- ■ Power banks charged. Charge phones, lights, and radios the moment a storm or outage warning hits.
- ■ If you have a generator: fuel stored safely outside, a heavy extension cord, and a carbon monoxide alarm. Never run it indoors or in a garage.

WATER

- ■ One gallon per person per day for 3 days. For a family of four, that is 12 gallons minimum.
- ■ Fill bathtubs and buckets at the first warning. That water is for flushing and washing.
- ■ A water filter or purification tablets as backup, plus one unscented bottle of household bleach with a dropper, labeled for water only. Follow CDC directions on the bottle.

FOOD

- ■ Three days of food nobody has to cook: peanut butter, canned meat and beans, granola bars, dried fruit, crackers.
- ■ A manual can opener. Test it now, not during an outage.
- ■ Baby formula, pet food, and any special diet food for 3 days.
- ■ Eat fridge food first, freezer food second, shelf food last. Keep fridge and freezer doors closed as much as possible.

LIGHT, HEAT, AND COOLING

- ■ Battery lanterns for each main room. Headlamps keep hands free.
- ■ Blankets and sleeping bags for every bed, even in summer homes that rely on electric heat.
- ■ In extreme heat: shade, loose clothing, water, and a plan to get anyone elderly or ill to a cooler place.

COMMS: STAYING IN TOUCH WITH NO SIGNAL

- ■ Write down key phone numbers on paper. Phones die and contacts vanish with them.
- ■ Pick one out of state contact everyone calls or texts to check in. Long distance lines often work when local lines jam.
- ■ Agree on a meeting place near home and one farther away, in case you cannot call at all.
- ■ Keep a car charger. A running car, used safely outside, is a phone charger and a radio.

MEDS AND HEALTH

- ■ A 7 day cushion of prescription meds if your pharmacy and doctor allow it. Rotate it so nothing expires.
- ■ First aid kit: bandages, antiseptic, pain relievers, tweezers, any allergy meds your family uses.
- ■ Copies of prescriptions and a list of allergies and conditions for each person, on paper.
- ■ Hygiene: hand sanitizer, wipes, trash bags, and a bucket with a lid and bags if the water stops.

DOCUMENTS AND CASH

- Small bills: at least $100 to $200 in ones, fives, and tens. Card readers die with the grid.
- Copies, paper and on a USB drive in a sealed bag: IDs, insurance, prescriptions, bank and emergency contacts.
- Photos of the inside of your home for insurance, saved off the phone as well as on it.
- Car fuel kept above half a tank during storm and outage season. Gas pumps need power too.

THE FIRST HOUR OF AN OUTAGE

- 1. Check your breaker, then check whether the neighbors are out too. Report the outage and note the time.
- 2. Fill tubs and buckets with water. Unplug computers, TVs, and game consoles so a surge cannot kill them when power returns.
- 3. Text, do not call, your check in contact. Texts get through on weak signal.
- 4. Decide fast: stay, or go to your backup location while roads and daylight are still on your side.
- 5. Listen to the radio on the hour. Write down what officials say and when they said it. Timelines matter.

Get the next checklist, the Black Sky briefs, and the outage timelines free by email at InfoSoldier.com. No spam. Unsubscribe any time.
Sources for the standards on this sheet: Ready.gov power outage and water guidance, CDC emergency water guidance, and the American Red Cross emergency preparedness checklists.