



Sanford Fire Department

PO Box 3729
Sanford, NC 27331-3729
www.sanfordnc.net

(P) 919-775-8316
(P) 919-775-8311
(F) 919-708-5492

How to Survive a Winter Storm without Power

Surviving winter storms after you lose power can be a challenging event. Depending on the length of time that the power is out, the house can get cold enough to freeze pipes within the house.

During this time, many residents still want to get heat into their house any way possible. Some have a generator with a cord that plugs into the dryer plug. This is dangerous for two reasons:

- 1) You have two male plugs on the cord – you can be electrocuted touching the contacts on the cord, and
- 2) You **MUST** turn off the main breaker to the house so that power will not be delivered back to the power lines, endangering the lives of the Progress Energy line crews.

The biggest danger is to the folks who bring their gas grills, camp stoves, charcoal grills, and other devices with an open flame into their house for heat. Open flame heaters create Carbon Monoxide (CO) during the breakdown of the hydrocarbon fuels. Carbon Monoxide is a colorless, odorless, tasteless gas that will make you sleepy as the concentration increases until you fall asleep and die. There are Carbon Monoxide gas detectors on that market that operate on home AC power as well as DC batteries. These will monitor the CO levels in the house during normal times, and with the battery backup will monitor the CO levels in the house when AC power is off. *If you MUST use an open flame heater to heat your house, be sure to have a CO monitor and open a window once in a while to allow fresh air into the house.*

Everyone who normally heats with hydrocarbon fuel (Gas or Oil) needs to have a CO monitor in their house in case their heating system malfunctions.

Ken Cotten
Division Battalion Commander
Sanford Fire Department