Before the Hurricane

- Develop an emergency plan that addresses any special medical needs you or your family members have. Call your local emergency management office to discuss necessary arrangements.

- Update your phone number and e-mail address with your electric company.

- Purchase appliances with built-in surge protection or install surge protectors to help safeguard valuable electronic equipment. Plug computers and other sensitive equipment into a separate, grounded circuit to isolate them from fluctuations caused when a major appliance restarts. Consider having a lightning arrester installed at your main circuit panel.

- Know all evacuation routes, and if told to evacuate, do so immediately.

- Have your Emergency Outage Kit stocked and readily available.

- Charge all cell phones and other battery-powered devices. Print out emergency contact information in case you lose power.

- Pay attention to local weather reports and emergency instructions on the radio, television, and Internet.

- When a hurricane is predicted, stock up on groceries, water, medications, and any other necessities such as infant supplies to avoid the need for travel during the storm.

- Secure loose branches and other objects that may become airborne in high winds. Keep ladders and tools away from power lines.

During the Hurricane

- Stay in a secure room and away from windows.

- Monitor weather bulletins on a battery-powered radio.

- Remain indoors. Stay inside even if the hurricane eye moves over your area because the storm will resume shortly.

- Turn off power to flood-prone basement appliances if it is safe to do so. However, if using an electrically operated sump pump, you should not turn off the power.

- If your power goes out, report your outage immediately to your local electric company. Don’t rely on your neighbors to report your outage.

continued
After the Hurricane

- Make sure the storm has completely passed before going outside.

- Stay away from downed power lines, flooded areas, and debris. Treat all fallen wires and anything touching them as though they are energized. Immediately report downed lines to your electric company.

If your power is out:

- Listen to the radio for further information and instructions.

- In hot weather, close drapes and blinds on the sunny side of your house, drink plenty of fluids, take your pets to a cool basement location, and go to an air-conditioned civic center, mall, or library if necessary to stay cool.

- If using a personal generator, please take all recommended precautions. Never use a generator inside your home, garage, crawl space, other enclosed areas, or anywhere exhaust fumes can enter into enclosed spaces. Fatal, odorless fumes can build up quickly and opening doors and windows or using fans will not prevent carbon monoxide buildup in the home.

- Remain patient. Every electric company has a detailed plan for restoring electrical service after a power outage. Typically, one of the first steps a company takes—to prevent injuries and fires—is to make sure that power is no longer flowing through downed lines. Restoration then proceeds based on established priorities. Learn more at www.eei.org.

Visit www.ready.gov to learn how to plan, be prepared, and act in your community.