Red Cross Urges Preparations for Strong Winds and Potential Power Outages

Local News

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Western Washington - With forecasts for powerful winds and heavy rains expected throughout Western Washington, the American Red Cross Mount Rainier Chapter reminds individuals and families to stay safe and be prepared. Some basic preparation and common-sense safety tips will help ensure safety during possible power outages and high winds.

Tips from the Red Cross on preparing for high winds and possible power outages:

Prepare for High Winds

Make trees more wind resistant by removing diseased and damaged limbs. Move or secure lawn furniture, outdoor decorations or ornaments, trash cans, hanging plants and anything else that can be picked up by wind and become a projectile. During the storm, draw blinds and shades over windows. If windows break due to objects blown by the wind, the shades will prevent glass from shattering into your home.

Top Safety Tips for a Power Outage

• Assemble essential supplies, including: flashlights, a portable battery-operated radio, extra batteries, at least one gallon of water, a supply of non-perishable food, and a non-electric can-opener.

• Only use a flashlight for emergency lighting. Due to the extreme risk of fire, do not use candles during a power outage.

• Use the phone for emergencies only. Listening to a portable radio can provide the latest information. Do not call 9-1-1 for information – only call to report a life-threatening emergency.

• Do not run a generator inside a home or garage. If you use a generator, connect the equipment you want to power directly to the outlets on the generator. Do not connect a generator to a home's electrical system.

• Turn off electrical equipment you were using when the power went out. Leave one light on so you know when the power comes back on.

• Avoid opening the refrigerator and freezer.

• If you use medication that requires refrigeration, most can be kept in a closed refrigerator for several hours without a problem. If unsure, check with your physician or pharmacist.

• Stay focused on the risks of smoke and carbon monoxide. If you do not have one buy a carbon monoxide alarm, they are available at most hardware stores. If you have one, check the battery to make sure it is working. If the alarm sounds: get to fresh air by going outside. Contact the fire department before you go back inside your home.

The American Red Cross is a non-profit, humanitarian agency dedicated to helping make families and communities safer at home and around the world. For more preparedness information, please visit www.rainier-redcross.org.