



# HOW TO PREPARE YOUR BUSINESS OR COMMUNITY FOR A POWER OUTAGE

Vector owns and operates networks that distribute electricity and gas across the greater Auckland region. We are constantly working to ensure safety and reliability of our networks. We always aim to do this work with minimal disruption to our customers.



As required by the Electricity Act 2010, we're committed to delivering electricity in accordance with our service standards, but given the nature of electricity and the network, cannot promise delivery of electricity that is free from defects and interruptions.

Our service standards cover:

- the time we take to restore power
- the number of interruptions you may experience
- the power quality you can expect

You can read the standards at [www.vector.co.nz/r-standards](http://www.vector.co.nz/r-standards)

## WHY DO OUTAGES OCCUR?

### Planned outages

Planned outages occur when we need to turn power off so that our people can work safely near our network assets such as power lines and transformers. The most common reasons for a planned outage are the replacement of power poles, overhead conductors or

transformers, and the maintenance of underground power cables. This is done to ensure quality and reliability of supply. Additionally, as Auckland grows, we are adding new connection points to our network for new developments. The power needs to be off for safety reasons, whilst this new connection work occurs.

We notify customers four days in advance of a planned outage, either by letter or email.

## Unplanned outages

Any network in the world - regardless of its location - can be affected by unplanned outages.

Outages are often caused by extreme weather, vegetation touching the lines, car accidents involving power poles, and lines and pipes being accidentally damaged by excavation or other construction work. Technical problems or equipment failure can also cause outages.

The greatest risk to our network is a storm, which can cause widespread outages.

## WHAT DOES VECTOR DO?

### Network control and maintenance

Our network control team works 24 hours a day, 7 days a week to balance the load across the network and to pre-empt and diagnose service interruptions. We have line mechanics in the field 24/7 managing planned works and responding to unplanned outage call-outs.

## Priorities during storms and major outages

In a major outage, the goal is to restore supply to as many customers as quickly as possible, while maintaining the safety of our crews and the public. This can generally be done by restoring in the following order:

1. Network substations, gate stations and main feeder lines/pipelines - these form the backbone of our network and must be repaired before power can be restored further down the line
2. Critical infrastructure - hospitals, water and sewage plants, airports
3. Major locations - buildings in the CBD, high rise buildings, commercial centres and industrial plants
4. Domestic properties - urban and rural
5. Streetlights and hot water pilot lines

Crews are trained to work on our networks in all weather conditions and at any hour. However, safety always comes first, and there may be times when it is unsafe to proceed. We will not allow work to go ahead if it cannot be done safely.

Delays may occur if crews are unable to get to the source of the outage, either because of the terrain, traffic congestion or because the affected line/pipe is on locked or secured private property.



## CONTACTING US

The fastest way to report an outage, network damage, or to get the latest information during an outage is to download our [outage app](#)

We also operate a 24/7 call centre for those customers who prefer to call on 0508 VECTOR (0508 832 867)

## HOW CAN YOUR **BUSINESS OR COMMUNITY** PREPARE FOR AN OUTAGE?

### BACK-UP POWER

- Generators: Consider installing a generator to keep essential services operational, for example electronically accessed doors, lifts and emergency stairwell and hall lighting.
- Emergency Lighting: Check how long emergency and back-up lighting in egress areas and stairwells will last the event of a power outage.

### BUILDING SECURITY

- If security doors and garage doors will not work in the event of an outage (e.g. you don't have a generator connected) consider hiring a security guard.
- Ensure lifts are locked off prior to planned outages to prevent people from being trapped. Place a note on the lift doors to let them know.
- Share information with the people affected so they're prepared for an outage and know the measures in place.
- If anyone is medically dependant on electricity, or are vulnerable, please make sure they have plans in place to manage during an outage.
- Install temporary automatic chargeable lanterns in areas that would normally be lit for common egress – particularly around fire escape routes, e.g. foyers, hallways, garages, main access doors (these can be obtained from most hardware stores).

### CAR ACCESS

- If garage doors and gates are electronic, open them before the outage, so people can access their cars. Alternatively, if there is a manual override, make sure they know how to access it.
- Consider using a security guard to protect access to the building.

### PROTECT SENSITIVE EQUIPMENT

- Consider using a surge protection device to protect appliances such as digital screens and computers from power interruption.
- You should check with equipment providers what to do to protect the equipment you use prior to a planned power outage and protect against turning off/restarting during any outage, e.g. pumps, medical machinery, electric doors, lifts etc.



To ensure continuity for either your business or your community in an outage, here are some things that you should consider.

## WHAT SHOULD YOU DO?

### PREPARE FOR AN OUTAGE

- Keep mobile phones charged and consider having a spare battery or mobile power pack.
- Have a torch and spare batteries handy.
- Consider using a surge protection device to protect appliances such as the TV or computer from power interruption.
- Ensure you have an adequate supply of water for drinking and flushing toilets (fill a bath or buckets prior).

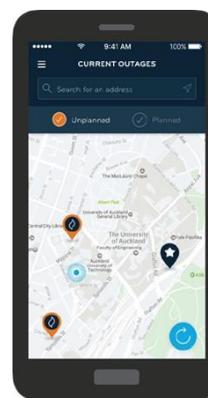
### DURING AN OUTAGE

- Check the [Vector outage app](#) to see if the outage is known. If not, report it via the app.
- Use a torch instead of candles (a torch is safer).
- Install a chargeable light/electric lantern that automatically turns on when the power is off (these can be purchased at most hardware stores).
- Switch off sensitive electrical equipment, such as your TV, computer and stereo as they can be affected by a power surge when power is restored.
- Keep the fridge closed so food will last longer while the power is off. A freezer will usually keep food frozen for up to 24 hours without power if the door is kept closed.
- Turn appliances off. Make sure elements on your stove, the kettle, and all heaters are turned off. This ensures they don't come back on without you noticing when the power supply is restored



If you use medical equipment that relies on electricity, you should let your retailer know and ensure you are prepared for power outages. If there is an immediate health threat, contact your health provider or call 111.

- Don't touch or use any electrical appliances while barefoot in damp or wet conditions.
- If you go out, be aware that street lights and traffic lights may not be working.
- Don't go near any damaged power lines and electrical equipment - stay at least eight metres away.



Search 'Vector outage' in your app store, visit [vectoroutages.co.nz](https://vectoroutages.co.nz)

