

Surviving the Next Big Storm January 2022

In August of 2020 Hurricane Isaias knocked out the power in Cornwall for a week. We must continue to plan how we will survive these extreme weather events. Weather forecasters are expecting continuation of bad weather with an extremely active hurricane season and plenty of winter weather. We survived this last storm with a few bumps, but things could clearly have been worse. Preparing your home and family for a prolonged power outage ahead of time is the best strategy, as emergencies can happen at any time of the year. The Selectman's Office and the Emergency Management Director have compiled some thoughts, recommendations, and tips to help you become more prepared. Communications are vital:

- When a major weather event hits Cornwall, the Selectman's Office and Emergency Management will use Email (cwselectmen@optonline.net); Websites (www.Cornwallct.org & www.facebook.com Town of Cornwall, CT, Emergency Management).
- The First Selectman may use reverse 911 on landline phones. If you do not have a landline phone (i.e. you only use cell phones or have an internet phone) register at www.ctalert.gov to receive reverse 911 calls. If you are out of town and have signed up your cell phone with the state reverse 911 service, you will receive a message concerning the threat. Please sign up for emails from the Town by sending a request to cwselectmen@optonline.net.
- The West Cornwall Firehouse is the town's Emergency Operations Center and is staffed during severe storms.
- If you are without internet or email, information will be posted at the post offices, Town Hall, and the Cornwall Country Market during times of major communications failures.

Gordon Ridgway, First Selectman 860-672-4959, cwselectmen@optonline.net

Jonathan Berry, Administrative Clerk 860-672-4959

Diane Beebe, Emergency Management Director 860-672-6547, Cornwall.EMD@AOL.com

Want to help?

Join Cornwall's CERT

Civilian Emergency Response Team

This team mobilizes when there is a town-wide disaster. There are a few meetings per year, which will include training on how to help during an emergency. If you are interested in helping out or working in our town shelter in the future, please consider joining this team.

If you are interested, email Diane Beebe: Cornwall.EMD@AOL.com

Tips for Weathering a Storm:

Water:

- Fill water jugs for drinking.
- Fill bathtubs and sinks with water for cleaning and flushing the toilet.

Food:

- Have a supply of non-perishable food that will feed your family for 3 days.
- Own a manual can opener.
- If you have a large freezer, fill empty spaces with jugs of water to freeze. This will keep your freezer cold longer.

Heat and Light:

- Fill the gas tank of your vehicle. This can be a life saving tool for warmth, radio, lights and transportation.
- Fill up your generator and gas containers for refilling your generator. Try not to run your generator full time, make your fuel supply last.
- Have an alternate form of heat that will not pump carbon monoxide into your living area. Make sure your alternate form of heat has a chimney or an exhaust vent. Make sure you have aged firewood.
- If you run a generator or wood stove, make sure you have battery-operated CO detectors in your living area. Do not operate propane burning lanterns or stoves designed for outdoor use inside the house.
- Have a supply of flashlights or battery operated lanterns ready, and extra batteries.
- Do not plug a generator into your house wiring without disconnecting from CL&P. If your 110 volt generator goes out to the transformer near your house, it will be multiplied many times through the transformer into a voltage high enough to kill someone trying to repair a damaged line.

Communication:

- Own a phone that will function without power,

such as a simple landline phone or a cell phone with a battery back-up. Make sure the batteries are fresh in the phone.

- Sign up your cell, cable, or out-of-town phone numbers at ct.alert.gov.
- Charge cell phones and computers. Own a back-up battery charger for your cell phone.
- Own a battery-operated radio so you can listen for local announcements.
- Make sure your 911 street number is visible from the road and is above the snow line.
- Check your neighbors. If you wish to be checked on during emergencies, please call 860-672-4959 ASAP so we can place you on a list of homes we will check first. When the weather event has subsided, our firemen will call or go to your house to make sure you are OK. If you are on this list and have moved in with friends or family, let us know.

Personal care:

- Make sure you have enough medications and other medical supplies.
- Baby wipes and hand sanitizer are handy for keeping clean while conserving water.
- Have a good supply of cash—without power, credit and debit cards cannot be processed.
- Keep your car ready to support your needs, with a flashlight, food that can freeze, good snow tires, and even tire chains.

Sources for Information:

- State alert system: sign up at ct.alert.gov
- Radio stations with local announcements: WHDD 91.7, 91.9 FM and 1020 AM, WZBG 97.3 FM, and WQQQ 103.3 FM.
- Phone:

Fire and medical emergencies: **911**

Information from the State of CT: **211**

Emergency Operations Center: **860-672-6526**

Selectman's Office: **860-672-4959**

Web Site: www.CornwallCT.org