

# WEATHER or not....

Power Outages Happen



# Kenmore Square 2013, Storm Nemo

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So when the power goes out, what's your biggest problem?

- Heat
- Food
  - Getting it, cooking it, or watching it expire
- Light
- Transportation/Isolation
  - Who is in your corner? Neighbors?
- Communications
- Special/Medical/Age Needs
- Boredom?
- Other?

# Elderly, Children, Unique Needs

- ▶ If someone who lives with you or who you are responsible for is especially vulnerable, have backup plans for lack of everyday conveniences to avoid frustration
- ▶ Could be emotional regulation or psychological reaction (e.g., fear of the dark).
- ▶ Susceptible to lack of heat
- ▶ Electric Medical Devices
  - ▶ Refrigerated medicines, CPAP machines, powered wheelchairs or stair lifts, etc.
- ▶ Don't forget your pets!!! Cold-blooded, not native to a cold-winter environment, aquariums, etc all need backups

# LIGHT

- ▶ Generators, fixed or portable
- ▶ Cell phone flashlight
  - ▶ Battery Usage
  - ▶ Recharge your cell phone?
  - ▶ On / Off schedule
- ▶ Fireplaces
- ▶ Glow Sticks
- ▶ Candles
  - ▶ Fire safety, awareness
- ▶ Camping lanterns
  - ▶ Fuel / batteries
- ▶ Flashlights or larger battery-powered / rechargeable work lights
  - ▶ WHERE ARE THEY?
  - ▶ Are they charged?
  - ▶ Extra Batteries and bulbs
- ▶ Solar lights like Luci
  - ▶ Test them before you need them

# HEAT

- ▶ Generators, fixed or portable
- ▶ Natural Gas Fireplaces
  - ▶ Can start w/o electricity or on battery power
  - ▶ Electric fans will not run
- ▶ Buddy propane heaters
- ▶ Indoor Kerosene heaters
- ▶ Pellet stoves, soapstone heaters, fancy stuff
- ▶ Blankets, warm clothing, layers, SOCKS
- ▶ Woodburning fires
  - ▶ Getting it started
  - ▶ Got firewood? Tools?
  - ▶ Hazards: Children, Burns
  - ▶ Can use it to heat water or even cook
- ▶ Hand Warmers
- ▶ Terra Cotta pot heaters
- ▶ Consider: heat or power only one room.
- ▶ Body heat is the warmest heat (that includes your animals!)

# SAFETY

## ▶ OUTDOOR

- ▶ Ice Melt / Sand
- ▶ Shoveling
- ▶ Walking/Footwear
- ▶ Frozen branches
- ▶ Wind chill

## ▶ DRIVING

- ▶ Ice vs snow, compact vs fresh, wet vs dry, Black Ice
- ▶ 4WD / AWD
- ▶ Traction, overcorrection, Brake Slow, Slow down

## ▶ INDOOR

- ▶ Locks/Lights/Awareness
- ▶ No generators indoors
- ▶ No gas stoves as heat source
- ▶ No BBQ/grills indoors
- ▶ Unplug valuable electronics to avoid power surge issues.
- ▶ Extension cords - tripping hazard



# What is Carbon Monoxide?

- ▶ Simple, colorless, odorless asphyxiant that replaces the oxygen in your red blood cells.
  - ▶ Blood bonds 250 times stronger to CO than oxygen
- ▶ This can lead to serious tissue damage, or even death.
- ▶ Created by activities like burning gas, wood, propane, charcoal, and kerosene, without proper ventilation or in small spaces
  - ▶ Includes natural gas appliances and non-electric vehicles or anything gas-powered

# Carbon Monoxide: a threat you won't detect

- ▶ No odor, no taste, no color.
- ▶ Affects brain and heart; damage can be permanent
- ▶ Escalates quickly
- ▶ Only slightly lighter than air
  - ▶ Won't rise to the ceiling unless because it is warm
  - ▶ Mixes well with surrounding air so spreads throughout a space
- ▶ Symptoms: much like flu without fever
  - Headache, Dizziness, Confusion
  - Weakness, Drowsiness, Blurred Vision
  - Nausea or vomiting.
  - Shortness of breath.
  - Loss of muscle control.
  - Loss of consciousness.

# Carbon Monoxide Alarms

- ▶ Not a smoke alarm (though can be 2-in-1)
- ▶ Placement: outside sleeping areas, on every floor of the home, near appliances/garage/fireplaces
- ▶ Test Regularly, Clean them, check batteries
- ▶ Lifespan less than 6 years due to life of gas sensors
- ▶ Goes off before damaging levels: get out immediately, seek fresh air.
  - ▶ Don't try to find the source.
  - ▶ Call 911 or seek medical attention
- ▶ **INEXPENSIVE AND EASY!** Death by CO Poisoning is a completely avoidable tragedy.

# General Weather Preparedness Suggestions

- ▶ Home insulation
  - ▶ Focus on ceiling/attic, then walls, lastly floor - Heat Rises
- ▶ Quality windows and exterior doors, chimneys and exhaust fans
  - ▶ Cover windows to insulation against radiant cold - will block out sunlight
- ▶ Water pipe and ducting Insulation
  - ▶ Leave a faucet dripping overnight
  - ▶ Have your HVAC ducts sealed against air leaks
- ▶ Wrap furnaces and hot water heaters
- ▶ Trick: Quarter on a cup of ice in the freezer
- ▶ Many other basic home efficiency upgrades will help!

# THINK AHEAD!

- ▶ An ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure.
- ▶ It's much harder to mitigate in the moment. Others who did not think ahead will have similar problems.
- ▶ Competition for resources or assistance is a very real thing. Buy things you are likely to need ahead of time (e.g.m Ice melt, batteries, bread, etc)
- ▶ Consider your personal situation, family, needs, ability to prepare, and do at least a little bit ahead of time to lessen your problems later.
- ▶ You don't have to solve every problem before it happens - prevent what you can