

# **Strong winds warning – power and travel advice**

With very strong winds forecast, it's important that people take care to protect themselves and their property. Disruption to traffic or travel is likely and power cuts are also a possibility. People should monitor the Met Office forecasts for their area, be aware of the weather conditions, and pay attention to safety warnings.

## **Emergency numbers**

People should note the following numbers in case of emergency:

- Emergency services – 999 or 112
- Housing Executive – 03448 920 901
- Northern Ireland Electricity Networks – 03457 643 643
- NI Gas Emergency Service – 0800 002 001
- Northern Ireland Water Waterline – 03457 440 088
- Flooding Incident Line – 0300 2000 100

## **Roads information**

If there are any problems on the roads, you can get the latest updates on the [this link](#):

## **Schools and Further Education colleges closures**

All schools and Further Education colleges have been advised to close today (Monday 16 October) as a precautionary measure.

## **Forest and country park closures**

Forests and country parks are closed to public access today (Monday 16 October) due to the severity of risk from falling trees and branches from the expected very strong winds.

You are advised to stay away from forests until the expected storm has passed and any damage is assessed. Please note that the risk is likely to last for some days.

## **Strong winds advice**

You should:

- keep your property in a well-maintained condition (for example replace/repair any loose roof tiles, guttering, and so on that could potentially come loose and cause injury or damage to property)
- secure loose objects such as ladders, garden furniture, wheelie bins,

- trampolines, or anything else that could be blown around
- close and securely fasten doors and windows
- park vehicles in a garage (if you have one) or keep them clear of buildings, trees, walls, and fences
- make sure you are prepared should there be a power cut

During a storm you should:

- stay indoors as much as possible
- if you do go out, try not to walk or shelter close to buildings and trees
- not go outside to repair damage while the storm is ongoing
- not drive unless your journey is really necessary

After a storm you should:

- be careful not to touch any electrical/ telephone cables that have been blown down or are still hanging
- not walk too close to walls, buildings, and trees as they could have been weakened

## **Preparing for a power cut**

It's important to be prepared for a potential loss of power. You should:

- know where your household fuses and trip switches are so that you can check if the problem is with your electrics only
- test smoke alarms regularly
- keep a supply of new batteries in torches and radios (for checking updates on news bulletins)
- keep a supply of candles
- keep mobile phones, laptops or tablets fully charged – so you will have use of battery power for a short time at least
- have the telephone numbers you might need to hand (as well as mobile phones, a non-mains powered landline telephone will help you stay in touch during any disruptions to your power supply)
- if you have a baby at home, make sure you have a supply of pre-prepared formula baby milk (if used) and prepare a flask of hot water to heat bottles and baby food (it is always safer to make up a fresh feed; when this is not possible, feeds should never be stored for longer than 24 hours)

If you depend on electrical equipment that is vital to your health, contact Northern Ireland Electricity (NIE) Networks to get on their Critical Care Register:

## **If your electricity goes off**

If your electricity goes off, you should:

- check your fuses and trip switches – then check if your neighbours are without power

- leave one light on
- leave your fridge/ freezer switched on with the door shut to maintain a low temperature
- check that other electrical appliances and machinery are switched off at the wall
- preferably use a torch, oil or gas lamp as a source of light rather than candles
- if you must use naked flames, please take extra care and make certain that they are put out before you go to bed
- check on elderly or vulnerable neighbours in your area to make sure they are okay
- if you are using a generator, be careful where you site it in case of carbon monoxide poisoning

## Reporting a power cut

If your power is off and you want to report it or get more information, contact NIE Networks Customer Helpline or visit their website:

## Traffic and travel

High-sided vehicles are most affected by windy weather, but strong gusts can also blow a car, cyclist, motorcyclist or horse rider off course. This can happen on open stretches of road exposed to strong cross winds, or when passing bridges or gaps in the hedges.

In very windy weather a vehicle may be affected by turbulence created by large vehicles. Motorcyclists are particularly affected, so keep well back from them when they are overtaking a high-sided vehicle.

Motorists are also advised to drive with care due to possible wind-blown debris.

Pedestrians and road users in coastal areas should also beware of dangerous conditions caused by strong winds, particularly around times of high tide.

If there are any problems on the roads as a result of strong winds, you can get the latest updates on the [TrafficwatchNI website](#).

If you're planning to travel by air or sea, you should check with the ferry company or airline in case there are any delays or cancellations.

## More useful links

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