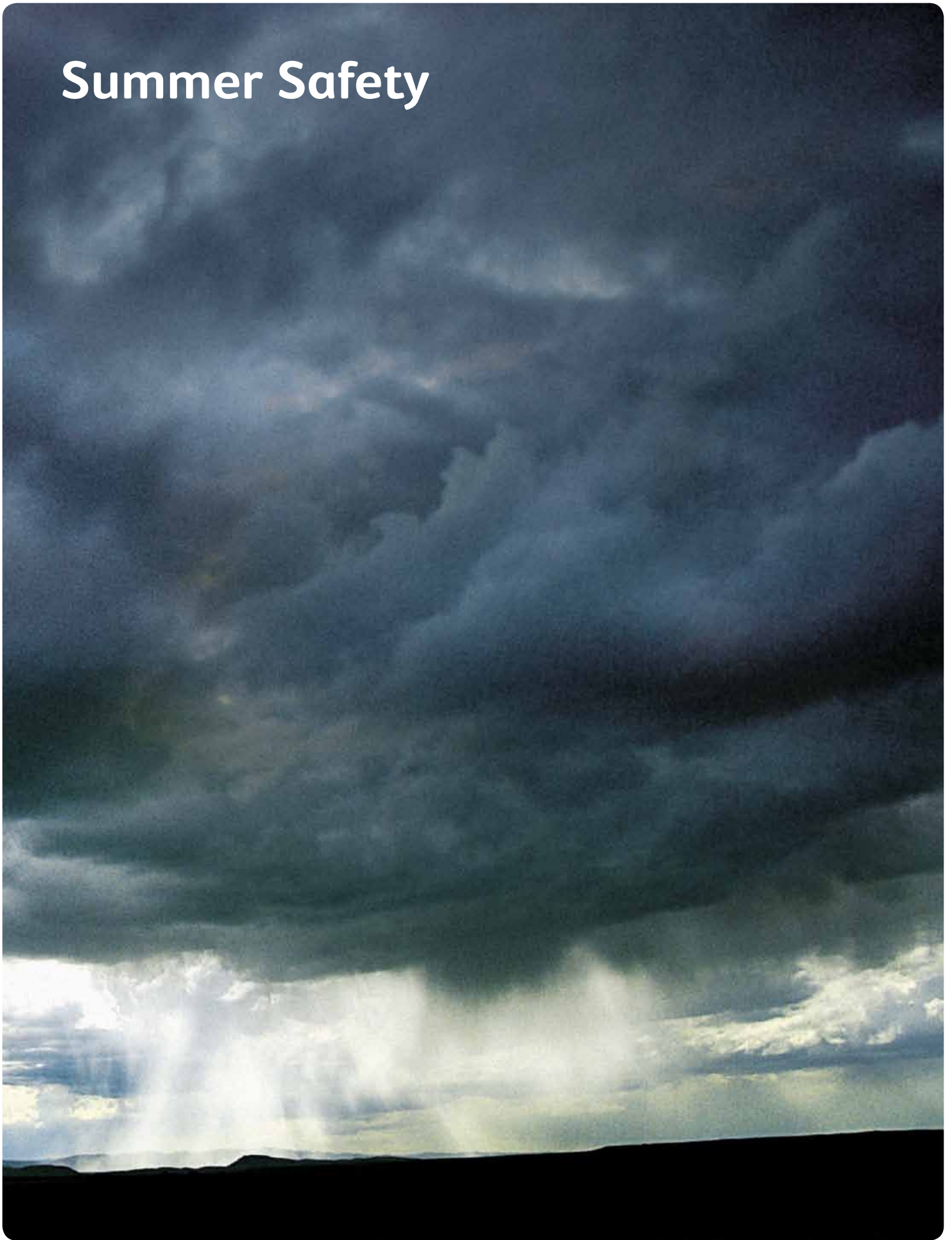


# Summer Safety



# Introduction

Summer is the traditional time for storms. They can be dangerous, with strong winds, fallen trees and lightning damaging property and disrupting the power supply.

While environmental factors like these are beyond our control, each year Ausgrid works to prepare the power network for summer, ensuring it is in the best possible shape to withstand the impact of storms.

Just as Ausgrid prepares for summer, there are things you can do to keep your family safe. We've put together this guide to help you through summer, with advice on what to do during a storm, where to turn for information on power outages and how you can help us restore supply as quickly as possible.

Given the major role a safe and reliable electricity supply plays in everyone's life, we believe it is our responsibility to keep you well informed.

Please take time to read the guide, discuss it with your family and prepare your home for summer.

Stay safe.

# Contents

- 2 Introduction
- 3 What you can do to prepare for summer
- 5 What Ausgrid does to prepare for summer and bushfires
- 6 Outage causes and advice
- 7 What Ausgrid does to restore your power
- 9 How you can help us help you
- 10 Q & A
- 11 Ausgrid contact numbers

# Safety advice



## What you can do to prepare for and stay safe during summer storms

Storms can cause considerable damage to buildings, trees and powerlines, creating dangerous situations.

Here are some simple tips for keeping your family safe during storm season.

### Before the storm – Make Safe:

- Keep the important information checklist on page 9 of this guide close to the phone.
- Have a battery-powered torch, radio and spare batteries handy.
- Tidy up loose items like garden furniture, toys and building materials that could become missiles in strong winds and cause damage to property or powerlines.
- Identify and prune trees that could come down in a storm. Do not attempt to trim trees near powerlines yourself – call Ausgrid on **13 13 65** for advice.
- Clean your gutters and check the roof for broken tiles and leaks.
- Know the location of your fuse box or mains switch and make sure it's covered to prevent water damage.



**During the storm – Be Safe:**

- Stay indoors and away from windows.
- Unplug sensitive electrical devices like computers, televisions and video recorders.
- Listen to your radio for weather updates.
- Don't use a landline telephone during an electrical storm.

**After the storm – Stay Safe:**

- Watch out for fallen powerlines, particularly those hidden in trees or other storm debris.
- Always assume fallen powerlines are "live", don't approach them, warn others to do the same and call Ausgrid on **13 13 88**.
- Don't swim in flooded creeks and drains as they could hide fallen powerlines.
- Listen to your radio for power restoration and weather updates



# What Ausgrid does to prepare for the summer storm season



While there will always be outages beyond Ausgrid's control – caused by fallen trees, lightning strikes, accidents, and other weather related incidents – each year we dedicate significant resources to strengthening our network and minimising disruptions to customers.

Preventative maintenance, tree-trimming, placing staff on standby and continuous monitoring of weather patterns ensure we'll be ready should a severe storm head our way.

Additionally, our ongoing line inspection program ensures every power pole and piece of Ausgrid equipment is regularly inspected for faults and any potential problems dealt with to minimise disruptions to customers' power.



## Bushfires

*Bushfires are another summer danger throughout rural and urban New South Wales.*

*They can be caused by a variety of factors including lightning strikes, sparks from machinery and electrical incidents such as fallen powerlines.*

*In the lead up to summer, Ausgrid patrols its powerlines in high-risk areas and makes repairs, as necessary, to help avoid bushfires that threaten life, property or the environment.*

*Property owners with private power poles should do the same.*

*For more information about bushfires and privately-owned poles visit [www.ausgrid.com.au/bushfireprevention](http://www.ausgrid.com.au/bushfireprevention)*

# Outages



**70% of blackouts are caused by fallen trees, debris blown into powerlines, lightning strikes or car accidents.**

Here's some advice on what to do if your supply is disrupted during a storm:

- Stay indoors – but if you do have to go outside, beware of fallen powerlines.
- Listen to a battery powered radio or your car radio for power restoration updates.
- If your entire suburb is without power our network control system will have detected the problem and we'll be working on re-storing supply.
- If your area hasn't been mentioned on the radio or it's just your house or a few homes in your area that are without supply, please call us on **13 13 88** to report the problem.
- If you've seen or heard something which you think could be responsible for the power outage, call us on **13 13 88**.
- Switch off and unplug sensitive appliances like televisions, computers and video recorders as well as air conditioners and hotplates. Make sure you leave one light switched on so you will know when power is restored.
- Take care when using matches and candles.
- Keep fridge and freezer doors closed to keep food cold.
- If you have a generator, only use it to provide power directly to appliances. NEVER connect it to the house switchboard or wiring as your equipment could be damaged when supply is restored.

# What Ausgrid does to restore power



Customer calls **13 13 88** to report an outage and Ausgrid's phone system identifies where the customer is calling from and lists known outages in that area.

1



If the customer has an emergency, wants to report an outage or has information that could assist in restoring supply, they stay on the line to speak with a Customer Service Representative.

2



The Customer Service Representative enters customer information into Ausgrid's computer dispatch system.

3



The call is prioritised and dispatched to a field crew. If the cause of the outage is unknown, the crew undertakes a fault-finding patrol. This can take some time, depending on the weather and terrain.

4



Field crew makes the site safe, isolates the affected area and restores power to as many customers as possible before commencing repairs.

5

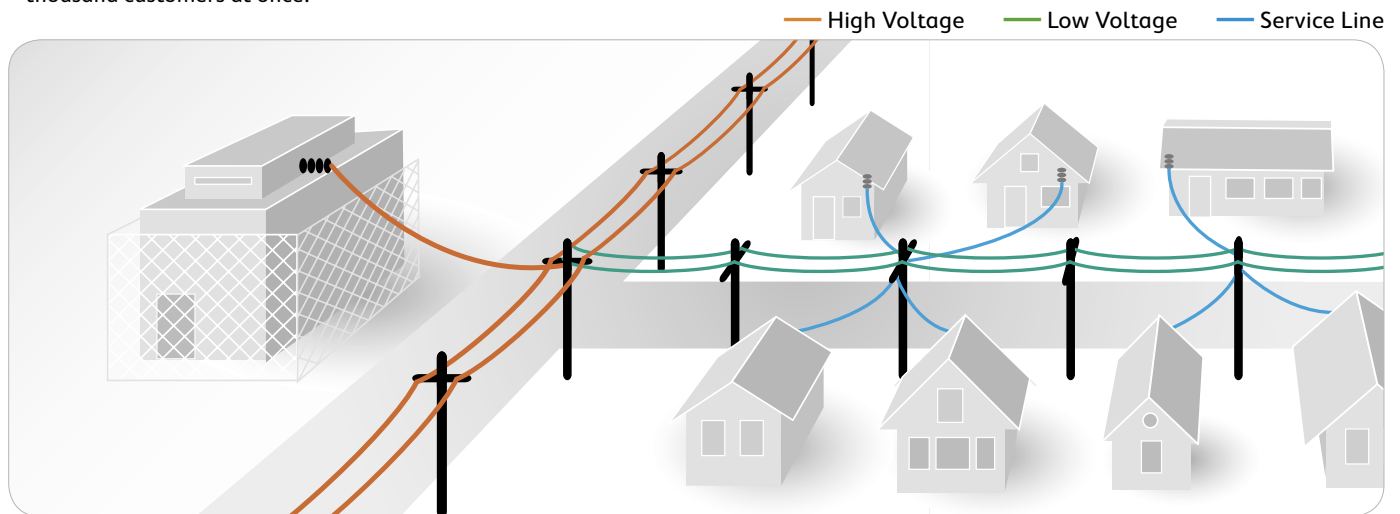
# Ausgrid's power restoration process

During blackouts Ausgrid works to restore power as quickly and as safely as possible. Our first priority is to make safe any life-threatening hazards such as fallen powerlines. After that, if possible, we restore supply to critical community infrastructure like hospitals, water and sewage pumping stations and emergency services. Then, as this diagram shows, we follow a process that will allow us to get as many customers back on as we can in the shortest space of time.

**1** If your entire suburb is without power but you can't see any damage to powerlines, it could mean high-voltage lines some distance away have been damaged. Damage to these lines can leave entire suburbs without power. Following a storm, Ausgrid's first priority will be repairing these high voltage lines because it will enable us to restore power to several thousand customers at once.

**2** Damage to the low-voltage lines running along residential streets will be our next priority. These low-voltage lines can power several hundred customers.

**3** Damaged service lines running to individual homes from the low-voltage lines will then be attended to. These service lines usually power only one property.





# How you can help us help you



Our field crews work hard to restore power as quickly as is safely possible, but there are things you can do to help us. If you've seen or heard something that you think could be

responsible for a power outage, you can call Ausgrid on **13 13 88** to report it.

Also, if you can provide us with:

- your street address or rural address number
- nearest corner
- number on your nearest power pole (as pictured), pillar box or substation
- street address of the fault these will help our crews locate the problem as quickly as possible.

It's also a big help if you can tell us what type of wires are down – is it the line that connects to your house or the lines that run between power poles?

If a tree has fallen across powerlines – has it brought them down or is the tree resting on them, or is it just a branch across the wires? If your circuit breaker/main switch keeps turning off, please call your electrical contractor.

***Always remember your personal safety – don't approach fallen powerlines for any reason and warn others to do the same. Be particularly careful around fallen trees and other debris – they can hide fallen powerlines.***

## Outage Checklist

If you lose power, here's a checklist of information that will help Ausgrid find and fix the problem as quickly as possible. Fill it in now and keep it handy in the event of an outage affecting your home.

Your name: \_\_\_\_\_

Your street address or rural address number: \_\_\_\_\_

Your nearest corner: \_\_\_\_\_

The number on your nearest power pole or substation (eg SY14070): \_\_\_\_\_

**For emergencies involving electricity, fallen powerlines or to report a loss of supply call 13 13 88.**

# Common outage questions and answers

**Q: I called from work to see if the power was back on at my house but your system told me there were no problems?**

A: Telephone systems detects where you are calling from and will automatically provide information about that area. If you're calling from another location you'll need to stay on the line and speak to a Customer Service Representative.

**Q: I called on my mobile and I had to listen to messages for several areas not just mine?**

A: At this stage our telephone system can't detect where a person using a mobile phone is calling from, so we provide callers using mobiles with all the outage information we have.

**Q: An Ausgrid crew started work in my street but left before repairs were complete?**

A: To ensure community safety after a major storm, sometimes our field crews will need to make fallen powerlines in several areas safe before they can begin repairs. Once public safety has been addressed they will return and complete repairs as soon as possible.

**Q: How long will the food in my fridge last without power?**

A: Refrigerators can keep things cool for up to 10 hours. Food in the freezer will last even longer. Keep the doors closed and place regularly-used items like milk and bread in an esky with some ice.

**Q: I have someone who needs medical equipment in my house, what do I do?**

A: If you rely on a continuous supply of electricity to run medical equipment, we urge you to plan with your doctor or medical service provider what to do in the event of an extended interruption.

**Q: I own a cordless phone and can't make calls?**

A: Most cordless phones need power to work. If you have to make a call, use a mobile phone or your landline phone during a power interruption.

**Q: I do not have a battery-operated radio and want to listen for power restoration updates?**

A: If you do not own a battery-powered radio you can use your car radio for news updates. However, ensure your ignition is only in the accessories position. Many mobile phones have FM radios built in too. You might also consider asking a friend who has power to listen for you.

**Contact us:**

To report an emergency or fault:

Loss of electricity supply **13 13 88**

For other inquiries:

General inquiries and billing **13 13 65**

Online: [www.ausgrid.com.au](http://www.ausgrid.com.au)

Postal: GPO Box 4009, Sydney NSW 2001

**Disclaimer**

This is not an exhaustive list of all safety matters you must consider. While care is taken in the preparation of this material, it is not comprehensive. Ausgrid cannot foresee every issue that may arise or guarantee that every safety factor arising in your personal circumstances is addressed in this guide.

