



METROPOLITAN GOVERNMENT OF NASHVILLE AND DAVIDSON COUNTY

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
March 4, 2020

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Public Urged to use Caution During Storm Damage Recovery

Many areas are still unsafe for the public due to downed live electrical lines, broken water lines and other environmental hazards

NASHVILLE, Tenn. – (MARCH, 4, 2020) The Nashville Office of Emergency Management is urging the public to wait until storm damaged areas are deemed safe by Metro Nashville utilities and Nashville Electric Service before beginning storm damage clean up and home repairs.

In the wake of the storm there are still a number of downed electrical lines that are on the ground and live. Coming in contact with one of the live electrical lines can be fatal.

When returning home remember these tips from the American Red Cross:

- Stay out of damaged buildings.
- Watch out for fallen power lines or broken gas lines and report them to the utility company immediately.
- Follow these tips for inspecting your [home's structure](#) and [utilities & systems](#) after a tornado.
- Take pictures of home damage, both of the buildings and its contents, for [insurance purposes](#).

When repairing your home remember these tips from the American Red Cross:

- Wear protective clothing, including long pants, a long-sleeved shirt and sturdy shoes, and be cautious.
- Learn more about [how to clean up after a tornado](#), including the supplies you'll need and how to handle fire hazards such as gas, electricity and chemicals.
- Don't just repair your home, build in tornado-resistant features to help protect against future damage.
- Strengthen existing garage doors to improve the wind resistance, particularly double-wide garage doors.
- If your home has been significantly damaged and will require rebuilding parts or all of it, consider building a [safe room](#).

Electrical, Plumbing and Heating Systems

- If you see sparks, broken or frayed wires, or if you smell hot insulation, turn off the electricity at the main fuse box or circuit breaker.
- If there is a pool of water on the floor between you and the fuse box or circuit breaker panel, use a dry wooden stick to try to reach to turn off the main fuse or breaker, but do not step or stand in water to do that. If you cannot reach the fuse box or breaker panel, call a qualified electrician for assistance.
- Inspect the panel box for any breakers that may have tripped. A tripped breaker may indicate damaged wiring inside your home. Do not turn them on. Call an electrician.

- Use a flashlight to inspect fuses. Replace broken fuses with exactly the same amperage rating and never use an object such as a coin or strip of metal to bypass the protection that fuses provide.
- If you suspect sewage lines are damaged, avoid using sinks, showers or toilets and call a plumber.
- If water pipes are damaged, turn off the water at the main valve. Call a plumber for assistance.
- If you have a heating oil tank system, turn off all valves and contact a professional specializing in maintenance of such equipment before using it again.

Telephones

- Check each telephone to see if it is still on the hook. Hang up any phones that aren't. Wait a few minutes, and then pick up one phone to listen for a dial tone to know whether you have working telephone service.
- If you don't have a dial tone, try unplugging all the phones. Plug in one at a time and listen for dial tone. This will help you determine if the phone itself is broken or the service is completely out. If it is, contact the telephone company to report the problem and request repair.

Other Household Items

- Normal household items, such as cleaning products, can cause toxic fumes and other hazards if they mix. See our [chemical emergency safety tips](#).
- Spilled chemicals that don't pose a health risk must still be carefully cleaned up. Wear rubber gloves and discard spilled chemicals and rags used for cleaning according to the advice of local authorities.
- Throw away food, beverages and medicine exposed to heat, smoke or soot. Food that was in the freezer can be used if it still has ice crystals on it. If not, discard it.
- Disconnect and check all appliances for damage before using them.

If you want to volunteer to help with clean up in damaged areas contact Hands on Nashville. The non-profit organization is organizing volunteer efforts. You can reach Hands on Nashville at www.HON.org.

You can also donate items to The Community Resource Center at 218 Omohundro Place, Nashville, TN 37210. You can also call them at (615)291-6688.

The Emergency Operations Center Media Line is (615) 862-8540.

Metro's Community Hotline will continue to be staffed 24 hours a day and can be reached by calling (615) 862-8750 for all non-emergency, weather-related inquiries, the reporting of hazards and to request assistance. In case of an emergency, residents should call 911.

The NERVE (Nashville Emergency Response Viewing Engine) has been activated in coordination with this EOC activation. This site will provide information about storm related road closures, any evacuation areas or routes, shelters and relief centers. This also includes a media tab with a Twitter feed and press releases. <http://nerve.nashville.gov>.