

SOUTHEAST ELECTRIC Cooperative



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The power of preparation

By **TYE WILLIAMS** | Manager

LIVING in southeast Montana, we always know severe weather events are just over the horizon, so it makes sense to be prepared. During a prolonged power outage or other emergency, this means having enough food, water and supplies to last at least a few days.

In honor of National Preparedness Month in September, I want to remind members of our community about the power of preparation. While you don't have to achieve a "doomsday prep" level of preparedness, there are several practical steps you can take to keep you and your family safe.

Even at a modest level, preparation can help reduce stress and anxiety, and lessen the impact of an emergency event. We recommend starting with the basics.

The basics

Here are general guidelines recommended by the Federal Emergency Management Agency:

- Assemble a grab-and-go disaster kit. Include items such as nonperishable food, water (one gallon per person, per day), diapers, batteries, flashlights, prescription medications,



first-aid kit, battery-powered radio and phone chargers.

- Develop a plan for communicating with family and friends (i.e., via text, social media, third party, etc.).

- Have some extra cash available; during a power outage, electronic card readers and cash machines may not work.

- Store important documents (birth certificates, property deed, etc.) in safe place away from home (for example, a bank safe deposit box).

- Keep neighbors and coworkers apprised of your emergency plans.

- Fill your car with gas.

- Organize your supplies so they are together in an easily accessible location that family members know about.

Caring for your vulnerable family members

If you have older family members or those with special needs, make sure they have enough medication and supplies for a few days. If they don't live with you, arrange for a neighbor to check in on them. If a severe weather event is expected, consider having your relative stay with you if feasible, otherwise call them daily. If you have an infant or young children, make certain that you have ample

formula, diapers, medication, and other supplies on hand to weather an outage lasting several days or more.

Southeast Electric Cooperative maintains a medical alert list for member households with individuals who depend on electricity-powered medical equipment. If you or someone in your home depends on a feeding machine, heart monitor, oxygen machine or nebulizer, call Southeast Electric at 406-775-8762 or 1-888-485-8762 or email us at info@seecoop.com. We will need the name and phone number of the contact person and the type of medical equipment.

Keeping your four-legged family members safe

For families with pets, having a plan in place in the event of a prolonged outage or an emergency will help reduce worry and stress, especially if you need to make a decision during an emergency.

- Bring pets indoors at the first sign of a storm or other emergency. Pets can become disoriented and frightened during severe weather and may wander off during an emergency.

- Microchip your pet and ensure the contact information is up to date.

- Store pet medical records on a

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Painting a house is no exotic dream vacation

By **VICKI FIX** | Southeast Electric

FIRST, let me share that I absolutely HATE to paint. I mean painting a house, inside or out.

During the first part of summer, I spent several weekends painting my son's house. Every room needed a fresh coat of paint.

He bought a home with beautiful wood trim, but with that came the high expectation that I could not get paint on that trim. Unfortunately, that didn't happen, and thankfully I don't know anyone who is more than 7 feet tall that will see what the top of the trim looks like. Just so you know, the people that had painted before didn't think I would see all the paint on the top of the trim either.

My son called that first night, when he knew I was 100 miles from him and couldn't punch him in the arm and said "I really should have taken that trim off. You guys made a mess." I have found that I prefer the trim work. It is very therapeutic. You take it nice and slow, which fits my personality.

The first weekend of painting was easy knowing that the flooring was all getting replaced. You dripped a little here and there and no worries. Then the new flooring came. Had to be a bit more tedious. As a matter of fact, I told my son he could finish the second coat in the hallway as I was not going to get paint on his new carpet. I can lay down all the plastic in the world, but if you don't nail it to the floor, it moves just as the drip comes off the end of the brush.

The next weekend I was really painting with enthusiasm, when I looked down and noticed that I was not holding the paint tray straight and was pouring navy blue paint

down the front of my shirt. I want to know how people paint without getting it all over themselves.

Here is my last thought about painting: I am kind of allergic to exercise. I mean my eyes water, I have shortness of breath and my skin turns red. Sounds like an allergy to me.

Up and down the ladder, scooting across the floor, jumping from the ladder to the counter, and all when it is 80-plus degrees in the house. I have really found some muscles that haven't been used in a while. Cardio is done for the year!

Okay – that wasn't my last thought. I do not like to clean brushes and rollers; thank goodness we don't have to use paint thinner anymore. Not worth my time. By the time you need or want to use them again, they are hard and crunchy anyway. I will save the trays. It is fun to see all the different colors you have used throughout the years.

Painting with friends or family is also more fun. Two more rooms upstairs and I am done with that project. Anyone want to help? RM

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USB drive or in an easy-to-remember location.

- Create an emergency kit for pets (include shelf-safe food, bottled water, medications and other supplies).

At Southeast Electric Cooperative, we care about your safety. Planning for an emergency situation today can give you more confidence to deal with severe weather and potential outages in the future. RM



TOP 9 Energy Hogs

1. Cooling & heating - 47%
2. Water Heater - 14%
3. Washer & Dryer - 13%
4. Lighting - 12%
5. Refrigerator - 4%
6. Electric Oven - 3-4%
7. TV, DVD, Cable - 3%
8. Dishwasher - 2%
9. Computer - 1%



BACK TO SCHOOL
Keep your eyes up and be alert!