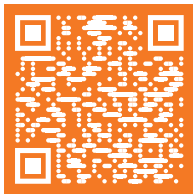


Rolling power cuts

What do I need to consider?



Diese Broschüre ist auch in Deutsch erhältlich.

Cette brochure est également disponible en français.

Il presente opuscolo è disponibile anche in italiano.

Este folleto también está disponible en español.

Esta brochura também está disponível em português.

Ova brošura dostupna je i na srpskom jeziku.

Kjo broshurë gjendet edhe në gjuhën shqipe.

Bu broşür Türkçe olarak da mevcuttur.

General information

Energy supplies in Switzerland and Europe are under strain. Interruptions in gas supplies to Switzerland and power plant failures could lead to energy shortages in the winter.

Should it no longer be possible to ensure the electricity supply, the Federal Council and the Federal Office for National Economic Supply would intervene with supportive measures such as savings, use prohibitions, rationing and, as a last resort, regional power cuts for a few hours at a time.

This brochure provides advice for personal contingency planning. Please keep this brochure for your reference.

If there is a shortage of electricity, the federal government will take a variety of measures (four-stage plan):

- 1** As a first measure, the Federal Council would appeal to the public to take energy saving measures.
- 2** As a second measure, the Federal Council could ban the use of certain devices and systems. For example, restrictions could be introduced at indoor swimming pools and saunas.
- 3** If these measures are not sufficient, large consumers would have to reduce their electricity consumption by a certain percentage (fixed quota).
- 4** If these measures still do not have the necessary effect, the Federal Council would order rolling power cuts for a few hours at a time.

This brochure focuses on the fourth measure: rolling power cuts.

What are rolling power cuts?

Rolling power cuts, also known as cyclical or rotating power cuts, are planned grid shutdowns during which individual districts, and the electricity consumers connected to them, are disconnected from the power grid for a certain period of time. This means that electricity will only be available in regular intervals and in certain districts (4 h / 4 h / 4 h or 4 h / 8 h / 4 h, i.e. 4 hours of shutdown for 4 or 8 hours of supply).

Example – 4 h / 4 h / 4 h:

From 8 am to 12 noon there is NO electricity;

From 12 noon to 4 pm there is electricity;

From 4 pm to 8 pm there is NO electricity

and so on

Example – 4 h / 8 h / 4 h:

From 7 am to 11 am there is NO electricity;

From 11 am to 7 pm there is electricity;

from 7 pm to 11 pm there is NO electricity

and so on

When will rolling power cuts occur?

If the demand for electricity is greater than the amount of electricity produced, the power grid can collapse (what is referred to as a 'blackout'). In order to prevent this, the Federal Council will order controlled power cuts in the event of an electricity shortage. It can be assumed that planned power cuts will only occur in extreme cases and when several factors coincide. The factors include empty reservoirs, cold temperatures, the failure of power plants or no possibility of importing electricity.

How do I know if and when I will be disconnected from the power grid?

The Federal Council will provide information about power cuts in press conferences. You will then be informed at what time and at what frequency electricity will not be available in your residential area (see examples on the left).

**How can
I prepare
now?**

Stock up

(Good advice for emergency provisions):

- Stock up on several days' worth of groceries. Note that some foods can also be kept without refrigeration and can also be eaten cold or without cooking (rice, pasta, muesli, rusks, tinned food, coffee, UHT milk, dried fruit, etc.).
- If you still wish to prepare warm meals, alternative cooking equipment, e.g. a camping stove, a fondue rechaud or a gas-powered grill, is a practical way of heating food and water. When using heating and cooking appliances with a naked flame, always ensure adequate ventilation (danger of carbon monoxide poisoning).
- If you care for infants, small children or sick relatives, it makes sense – as a precaution – to warm up baby food and/or boil water and keep it warm in thermal containers during phases with electricity.
- Make sure to have around 9 litres of drinking water per person available.
- Keep a supply of flash torches, batteries, candles, matches and lighters around the house to provide light in the event of a power cut. Do not leave burning candles unattended.
- Using a battery-powered or car radio will also let you receive information from the authorities in the event of a power cut.

- Warmth is especially important in winter. Thick blankets and warm clothing can provide temporary relief if your heating fails due to a power cut.
- If you have a fireplace or wood-burning stove, stock up on wood, briquettes or pellets.
- Since ATMs are also affected by power cuts and electronic means of payment, such as debit and credit cards or the option of paying with your smartphone, can fail, the Federal Office for National Economic Supply recommends always having some cash on hand.
- Soap, toilet paper, an emergency first-aid kit and medication are also key components of your emergency provisions.
- Don't forget food for your pets.

What do I need to consider if I or my relatives are in permanent need of medical care?

Stock up on a week's supply of medicines and hygiene products. Talk to your doctor about the supply of electrical devices such as oxygen or home dialysis machines, etc. Private individuals who are permanently dependent on electricity for medical reasons must go to a hospital on their own initiative **BEFORE** the power cuts begin, because these are the only places where there will be power during power cuts.

**What should I
do if a rolling
power cut is
imminent?**

- **Check that all electrical appliances that could pose a hazard when power is restored are switched off (e.g. stove tops, irons, etc.).**
- **Unplug your electrical devices BEFORE the power cut begins so that they are not damaged when you switch them on again.** Voltage spikes can occur when power is restored, which can damage sensitive equipment.
- **When the power comes back, switch devices back on one at a time.** This helps avoid the risk of overloading the power grid.
- **Avoid using lifts for a quarter of an hour before the power cut.**
- **Do not park in car parks (underground or above ground) that are secured by barriers.**
The barriers will no longer work if the power is switched off.
- **Avoid making unnecessary phone calls during power cuts.** This avoids the risk of a network overload. Only call the emergency number in emergencies. Instead, listen to the radio (SRF) to obtain information. You can obtain more information from the emergency meeting points in your district. You can find out where these are from your district/city administration, from the district notice boards or at www.notfalltreffpunkt.ch.

**What should I
consider
during the
power cut?**

Household

Will my food stay fresh in the fridge or freezer?

During the power cut, refrigerators and freezers should be opened as rarely as possible! Food will stay cold or frozen for several hours even if the device is not powered.

Will my drinking water supply be maintained during the power cut?

As a rule, the drinking water supply should be ensured. However, in many places, electric pumps are needed for a functioning drinking water supply – these would have to be operated with emergency power generators during a power cut. In individual cases, the drinking water supply may therefore be interrupted. Note the recommendation for emergency provisions (9 litres of drinking water per person per week) and be sure to use water sparingly.

Will the sewage systems work during the power cut?

Electricity is required to clean waste water. For this reason, continuous cleaning of the waste water cannot be guaranteed, so you should produce as little waste water as possible. The toilet flush works using water pressure and will work as long as the drinking water supply is guaranteed.

Will I still have hot water during the power cut?

Yes, as long as the boiler is at least half full when the power cut begins, the amount of hot water should be sufficient for several people, for example in an apartment building.

Will my heating still work during the power cut?

Electric heating, gas and oil heating, heat pumps and district heating networks are all dependent on electricity. For this reason, your heating will no longer work if the power grid is switched off.

How do I ensure that my home stays warm?

Ventilate your home as little as possible during the power cut. Close room doors. Close shutters at night. Wear warm clothes.

Will my own photovoltaic system still work without an electricity supply?

Only if you have a non-integrated system.

What will I no longer be allowed to do?

What should I consider?

- Avoid using lifts
- If you have an electric garage door, it is better to park your car outdoors
- Raise electric blinds before the power cuts
- (during the day)
- Switch electric doors to manual operation

Telephone and mobile networks

Will telephones and mobile networks still work?

Wherever the electricity supply is maintained, it should be possible to make phone calls. The transmitters on mobile phone masts are equipped with batteries so that the systems can continue to run for at least an hour in the event of a power cut. Central hubs where signals from several transmission towers converge can function for up to four hours without a power supply. Central data centres are also equipped with emergency power systems that can bridge at least 72 hours. Telephone and mobile networks may fail in the event of a longer power cut.

How do I make emergency calls?

If the mobile and telephone networks no longer work, go to an emergency meeting point. You can find out where these are from your district/city administration, from the district notice boards or at www.notfalltreffpunkt.ch.

At the emergency meeting point, you will receive information on the situation and be able to make calls to the emergency services. You can find out when the emergency meeting points are open on the radio or via Alertswiss (at www.alert.swiss or on the app).

Obtaining information

What is the best way to obtain information?

The best way to obtain information is from the radio (SRF). Get a battery-powered radio (don't forget spare batteries) or a crank radio in advance, or use a car radio.

Will I still receive post?

The postal system would be severely affected by a power shortage. Regular postal deliveries would not be guaranteed. Delays should therefore be expected.

Will I still receive my newspaper?

Due to logistical challenges and restrictions on editorial work, the publication and delivery of daily print media cannot be guaranteed.

Medical care and emergencies

Which medical and care facilities will remain open?

Larger hospitals will always have electricity.

What do I need to consider if I or my relatives are in permanent need of medical devices or equipment?

Private individuals who are permanently dependent on electricity for medical reasons (oxygen machine, home dialysis machine, etc.) must go to a hospital on their own initiative BEFORE the power cuts begin, because these are the only places where there will be power during rolling power cuts.

Will I get all the medicines I need?

Power cuts will be announced ahead of time, so please take precautions and have your necessary medication available at home.

What should I do in a medical emergency?

If you need help, try calling the usual emergency numbers. If the telephone network stops working, go to the nearest emergency meeting point or ask a neighbour for help if you cannot go to the emergency meeting point yourself. Information on the locations of the emergency meeting points can be found from your district/city administration, from the district notice boards or at www.notfalltreffpunkt.ch.

What should I do if there's a fire?

Call the fire brigade. If the telephone network stops working, go to the nearest emergency meeting point. You can find out where this is from your district/city administration, from the district notice boards or at www.notfalltreffpunkt.ch.

Familiarise yourself in good time with how to handle fire extinguishers, fire blankets and fire hose cabinets (finding out where they are in the building, reading operating instructions).

Road traffic and public transport

Will I be able to use public transport?

Public transport will be severely restricted during the power cuts. It is likely that diesel-powered buses will replace electric buses and trams. Display boards and ticket machines will stop working, and buses will not run according to their regular timetables. Train services will be cancelled.

Will the road infrastructure still work (traffic lights, street lighting, level crossings, barriers, etc.)?

Rolling power cuts will have an impact on road infrastructure: traffic lights and street lighting will no longer work; level crossings, barriers and tunnels (ventilation and lighting) will also be affected by power cuts.

Can I still fill up my car during rolling power cuts?

No, not at petrol stations located in the shutdown area. Fuel dispensers need electricity to work.

Air travel: will I still be able to fly to go on holiday?

The emergency power supply of the respective airports is subject to their operators; whether and when flying will be possible cannot be said at this point in time.

Shopping

Will I be able to go shopping during during rolling power cuts?

Ideally, you will have already stocked up on emergency provisions so that you can feed yourself from your supply during the power cuts. If you still have to go shopping, note that retailers will also be affected by the power cuts – regular opening hours cannot be guaranteed. Take cash with you.

Will I still be able to pay with bank cards or TWINT?

No, card and mobile payment systems will no longer work. Make sure that you always have cash on hand.

Which shopping options will remain available and which will be closed?

It is difficult to predict. Branches of large retailers could be completely closed. Small local shops may still be open. Opening times will be adjusted.

How can I deal with shortages in the household?

Before going to the shop, check out possible exchange options in your neighbourhood and with friends. You should also foster solidarity with older or immobile neighbours and acquaintances – help each other out.

Work and school

Will I still have to go to work during the power cuts?

Clarify in advance with your employer whether you will be allowed to work from home during power cuts or whether you will have to go to the workplace.

Will schools be closed if rolling power cuts occur?

Schools will remain open for as long as possible.

Useful websites and information

Federal Office for National Economic Supply

bwl.admin.ch

OSTRAL

ostral.ch

Website of the Don't Waste campaign

dont-waste.ch

Hotline 0800 005 005

hotline@bwl.admin.ch

Emergency meeting points

notfalltreffpunkt.ch

Emergency supply checklist

Food and drink

- 9 litres of drinking water per person
- Rice, pasta, bulgur, legumes, etc.
- Canned vegetables, mushrooms and fruits
- Ready meals (e.g. röstis or instant soup)
- Dried meat and fish
- Rusks or crisp bread
- Muesli, dried fruit, nuts
- Hard cheeses, processed cheeses
- Flour, dry yeast
- Sugar, salt, pepper, stock cubes, oil or other fats
- Jams, honey, chocolate
- UHT milk, condensed milk
- Coffee, cocoa and tea
- Special foods (e.g. baby food or in case of food intolerance)

First-aid kit and hygiene

- Soap, disinfectant, face masks
- Toilet paper
- Personal medication

Technical equipment

- Battery-operated radio including spare batteries, crank radio
- Torch including spare batteries
- Candles, matches, lighter
- Gas cooker, fondue rechaud, grill
- Power bank

Other

- Cash
- Pet food

