



Response to a major incident

What you can expect from us

WESTERN POWER 
DISTRIBUTION

Serving the Midlands, South West and Wales

As a Category 2 responder under the Civil Contingencies Act (2004), Western Power Distribution (WPD) has an obligation to cooperate with Category 1 responders to plan for emergencies and meet the needs of those who may be vulnerable as a result. This document details the response you can expect from us and also the information we hold in relation to vulnerable customers. This document also seeks to clarify the procedure for making this available to Category 1 responders when required.

WPD is an Electricity Distribution Network Operator. We are responsible for operating the electricity network of overhead lines, underground cables, poles, pylons and substations. We are not an electricity supplier (the company that you pay your electricity bill to) nor are we an electricity generator. We are responsible for the safe delivery of a reliable power supply to 7.8m customers across a 55,300sq km area covering the East and West Midlands, South Wales and South-West England. Our network spans the width of the country from Penzance in Cornwall, all the way to Skegness on the East Coast and consists of 221,000km of overhead lines and underground cables and some 185,000 substations. We are the company you would call if you live in the above areas and suffer a power cut.

We appreciate the additional vulnerabilities caused by a lack of power, regardless of how long the power cut lasts and take our responsibilities as a responder seriously. Therefore, we have created a bespoke power cut map which details all faults on the WPD network.

The map can be found at www.westernpower.co.uk/Power-outages/What-s-Happening/Power-Cut-Map.aspx

Any queries relating to the service should be directed to our Emergency Planning Officer:
Carl Henshaw: chenshaw@westernpower.co.uk

24/7 Operations Centres - (for use in the event of a loss of supply)

The number is also available publicly on the WPD website

0800 6783 105 or call **105**

In the event of a loss of supply, the public can dial **105** and/or also take a look at our website to check the electricity supply in their local area. Additional information and advice for procedures and safety during a loss of supply, and the above contact numbers are also easily accessible: <http://www.westernpower.co.uk/Power-outages.aspx>

Alternatively, updates and information on power cuts in each of the above areas can be found on our Twitter page by following [@wpduk](https://twitter.com/wpduk)

Priority Services Register - Customers who depend upon electricity for medical and communication needs may feel particularly vulnerable during a power cut. These customers are able to join our Priority Services Register.

Information Held

Vulnerable customer data is held based on the following categories:

| | |
|---|---|
| Chronic/serious illness | Pensionable age |
| Heart, lung & ventilator | Families with young children 5 or under |
| Dialysis, feeding pump and automated medication | Blind |
| Oxygen concentrator | Partially sighted |
| Nebuliser and apnoea monitor | Hearing/speech difficulties (inc. Deaf) |
| MDE electric showering | Unable to communicate in English |
| Careline/telecare system | Dementia(s) |
| Medicine refrigeration | Developmental condition |
| Stair lift, hoist, electric bed | Mental health |
| Oxygen use | Additional presence preferred |
| Poor sense of smell | Temporary - Life changes |
| Physical impairment | Temporary - Post hospital recovery |
| Unable to answer door/restricted movement | Temporary - Young adult householder (<18) |
| Restricted hand movement | |

This information is collected through registration to our Priority Services Register (PSR). This can be done directly with WPD or via the customer's electricity supplier. For customers with individual needs, more information on this scheme can be found at <http://www.westernpower.co.uk/About-us/Priority-Services.aspx>

Provision of Information

We agree to provide specific information to Category 1 responders as part of their response to an emergency situation where there is a need for the identification of vulnerable people - those who are less able to help themselves during an emergency. Any personal data provided is only to be used for the purpose of identifying and assisting those vulnerable people or households affected by the specific emergency for which it has been requested. The requesting organisation is responsible for maintaining an appropriate level of security and confidentiality of any data provided under this agreement until its disposal. The information can be used during the emergency, and for any debrief or analysis activities held immediately after the emergency. At the time of providing personal data, we will agree with the requestor on an appropriate timescale for which the data may be retained and will require an assurance that the data provided has been appropriately disposed of in line with that agreement.

Information Format

We will endeavour to provide the information in the format requested, once the identity of the requestor has been verified. Details available include:

- Name
- Telephone Number
- Special Condition Type
- Property Name
- Number
- Street
- Village/Town
- City
- Postcode

Requesting Information

To request information through this agreement, the requesting organisation should call the 24/7 number above and press option 1. This will route the call straight through to an agent. Requests for information during, or prior to exercises should be made to:

Carl Henshaw 07734 491775 or 01332 827683

The following information should be provided:

- Name and organisation you are calling from
- Contact number and email address for verification
- Brief description of the emergency for which this information is requested
- The categories of vulnerable customer data is requested for
- The postcode area for which the information is required (this can be individual postcodes or postcode areas e.g. B26, CV1 provided road names are given too)

Further contact information can be found on our website

<http://www.westernpower.co.uk/About-us/Priority-Services.aspx>

Adverse/Severe weather

Any adverse weather has the potential to disrupt power supplies. However, we have robust, tried and tested methods of planning and responding. Our responsibilities under the Civil Contingencies Act (2004) are aligned with our commitment to our customers and we take these events seriously to provide a reliable service. In order to ensure an efficient response we have internal policies and procedures in place to ensure business continuity.

The planning prior to weather events can include putting additional staff on standby, including field resource (engineers) and additional Control Room/Contact Centre staff to handle the potential increase in calls from Customers/Engineers. Planned works can be cancelled to focus our attention on fixing faults and local depots/offices are often opened earlier than normal in anticipation.

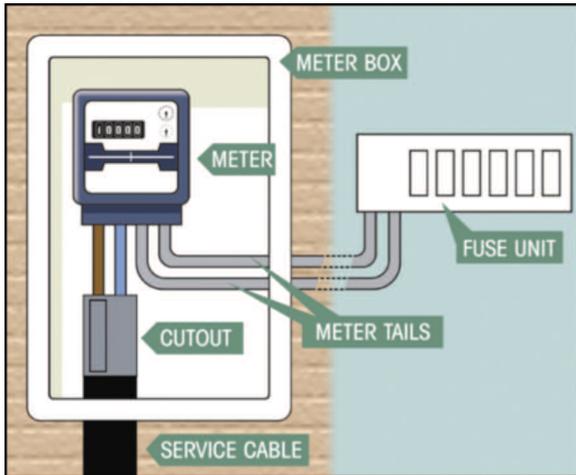
Ahead of any potential disruption to our networks as a result of adverse weather conditions, we use a series of trigger points to categorise weather in response to information from our forecasters, MeteoGroup. High winds, heavy rain, lightning and snow/ice accretion are the most disruptive to our network. High winds and ice accretion can cause extensive damage to our overhead network, with wind speeds over 55mph having the potential to bring down power lines. Heavy snow on the ground impacts our ability to respond to faults, although many engineers have 4x4 vehicles which aid a quick and efficient response. Finally, heavy rain and resultant flood water on a large scale have the potential to impact our assets. However, areas most at risk have mitigation measures in place, such as flood barriers, pumps and high water level alarms. We also keep our own sets of temporary flood defences which includes maintaining a fleet of pump appliances (modified ex fire engines).

Prior to adverse/severe weather conditions we will endeavour to notify partners of our contingency plans and ensure updates are sent throughout the event. Our website is also available 24/7 if further information is required with regard to the electricity supply in your area.

Register for our Stakeholder updates and we will notify you prior to any adverse/severe weather conditions, or during incidents, of our contingency plans and ensure you are kept updated throughout the event. This can be done via our website which is available 24/7.

Community Resilience

In order to ensure community preparedness and resilience as part of our responsibility and commitment to our customers, a number of downloadable leaflets are available through the power cuts section of our website (<http://www.westernpower.co.uk/Power-outages.aspx>) detailing actions to take prior to and during a loss of supply. These contain advice for domestic and small business customers. We will provide hard copies on request.



In the event of a loss of supply, if able to, customers are advised to check the fuse box located within their property or to check the electricity meter which can be located either internally or externally at every property before contacting our 24/7 Operations/Contact Centre.

The customer is responsible for the replacement of fuses within the fuse unit in addition to the maintenance of internal electrical appliances by a qualified electrician.

The distribution network and meter operators acting on behalf of the electricity supplier are able to work on the cut-out and meter.

The diagram shows a typical external electricity meter located within domestic properties and small businesses.

Customers are advised to avoid touching electricity meters and steer clear of water in which the meter may be submerged during flood events.

Advice given to ensure the safety and well-being of our customers

Customer Preparation - Prior to a Power Cut

Simple steps can be taken by customers that can help them in the unlikely event of a power cut. These include:

- Ensuring vulnerable neighbours have sufficient supplies or a means of contacting friends or relatives in an emergency
- Keeping a charged mobile phone or old-fashioned analogue telephone at hand, as landline phones which require a power source will not work during a power cut
- Using a battery-powered radio to listen for information provided through local radio stations
- Keeping a torch at hand as a safer method of lighting instead of using candles or paraffin heaters
- Wearing warm clothing
- Using power surge protector plugs on sensitive electrical equipment (such as computers) in addition to regularly backing up work
- Ensuring medical equipment reliant on an electricity supply has a battery back-up and the individual is signed up to our Priority Services Register (<http://www.westernpower.co.uk/About-us/Priority-Services.aspx>)

Customer Preparation - During a Power Cut

- Check with neighbours, look at street lights etc, to see if the problem is affecting a wider area or if it may be an issue with fuses within the property
- Check the trip switch is in the 'on' position (if operated, switch off appliances and attempt to reset the switch to the 'on' position). If not operated, call our 24/7 Operation/Contact Centre to report the issue
- Keep freezers closed as they will remain cold if unopened for up to 12 hours
- Keep in contact with neighbours if gas supplies to appliances are unavailable as they may be able to help with providing gas for cooking, warm drinks etc.
- Use our 24/7 Operations/Contact Centre to inform us of any difficulties customers may be having. Arrangements can be made with the British Red Cross to provide help to vulnerable people including warm meals and drinks
- Check on vulnerable neighbours (if possible) to ensure they are warm, medical equipment is working and they have sufficient food and drink supplies.

All information above can be found within information booklets that are available on our website (<http://www.westernpower.co.uk/Power-outages.aspx>).