

November 2015

I am sure that most of us can remember the severity of the weather that we experienced last winter...and the resulting power outages. Though winter is not scheduled to officially arrive for at least another month and a half, the following information will help you prepare for any instance where you may lose power regardless of the season.

From time to time, usually during inclement weather, Hershey's Mill villages and the surrounding community may lose electricity. While most outages last two or three hours, a few have lasted for more than 24 hours. During power outages lasting any length of time, the Security Department receives dozens of phone calls from residents who find themselves in inconvenient, or even emergency, situations that could be prevented with some advance planning. Listed below are a few suggestions that can better prepare people for a power outage:

1. When the power is out, most automatic garage door openers will not operate. For those residents with detached garages, be sure you know how to operate your emergency door release.
2. Keep plenty of flashlights around the house, and keep extra batteries handy.
3. Keep a charged cell phone somewhere in your house. Providing that phone and cable service have not gone out along with the electricity, Verizon customers will continue to receive phone service; and Comcast Phone customers should have phone service for 6-8 hours before the backup battery in the modem expires.
4. If you are dependent on any life-saving electrical devices (oxygen pumps, medical monitors, etc.), please contact your medical supply company to discuss options for a backup power supply.
5. Turn off any appliances that you were using when the power went off. When the power goes out unexpectedly, a person may have been using their stove, heating pad, or other device that requires monitoring. A person might leave the house and forget that these items were left running. If the person is not home when the power is restored, then the stove, heating pad, etc. may begin operating again without any supervision causing a fire hazard.

Please call PECO at 1-800-494-4000 to report that your power is out and for all outage-related questions, as PECO requires account holders to report their problem directly and does not provide the Security Department with any more information than they give to residents. When the Security Department is inundated with calls regarding a power outage, the phone line is then tied up; and residents who are calling with security-related issues or emergencies cannot get through.

If you have available a smart phone with a data plan, you can visit the PECO website at www.peco.com and report your outage via the "Report An Outage" link on the page. Also, PECO provides an "outage map" on its site; and this allows customers to see (1) where reported outages are located, (2) how many people are affected, and (3) the time by which the outage should be repaired.