

# Fact Sheet: Tips for Driving Safely when there is No Electricity

---

**Release Date: October 21, 2017**

A disaster or severe storm can cause power outages and increase risks when driving. Use the following tips to help keep you, and the other drivers safe on the road.

- **Wear Your Seatbelt:** Wearing your seatbelt can reduce injuries sustained in an accident, no matter the distance you will be travelling. Seatbelts should always be worn by every person in the vehicle, even if the car has airbags. You should wear the lap belt and the shoulder belt for the most protection possible.
- **Come to a Full Stop at Traffic Signals without Power:** Treat the intersection as a four-way stop. Come to a full stop before entering the intersection, look before you proceed, and take turns, one-by-one, when entering the intersection.
- **Use Caution:** Without street lights to guide your way and no traffic signals at intersections, use extra caution on the road. Avoid driving at night or during bad weather whenever possible.
- **Watch for Downed Wires:** Avoid driving near and over downed wires. Report any downed wires to your local utility company and local officials. Treat every wire as if it were live and dangerous.
- **Be Prepared:** Keep a first aid kit, flashlight, and spare batteries for the flashlight in your car in case of emergencies.
- **Slow Down:** Drive slower than the posted speed to avoid accidents, especially when entering and crossing intersections. Keep a safe distance between yourself and others. Hazards and risks may be harder to see, especially at night, and driving slower may help you avoid collisions.
- **Focus:** Do not talk on your phone or text while driving, do not eat, and do not do anything else that may distract you behind the wheel. Limit your actions in the car to just getting to your location. Stay alert, not just for other drivers, but for pedestrians, bicyclists, and motorcyclists as well.
- **Use Turn Signals:** Help the other drivers on the road know your actions well ahead of making them by using your turn signals for each turn you intend to make, or when changing lanes.



**FEMA**

Page 1 of 2

- Watch for Debris: High winds that took down the power lines can also increase the amount of debris on the road. Debris can block lanes on the road and make driving more dangerous. Use caution when driving around debris, and be aware that you may need to take a different route altogether.

###

FEMA's mission is to support our citizens and first responders to ensure that as a nation we work together to build, sustain, and improve our capability to prepare for, protect against, respond to, recover from, and mitigate all hazards.

Disaster recovery assistance is available without regard to race, color, religion, nationality, sex, age, disability, English proficiency or economic status. If you or someone you know has been discriminated against, call FEMA toll-free at 800-621-3362 (voice, 711/VRS - Video Relay Service; TTY: 800-462-7585). Multilingual operators are available (press 2 for Spanish).

The SBA is the federal government's primary source of money for the long-term rebuilding of disaster-damaged property. SBA helps businesses of all sizes, private non-profit organizations, homeowners and renters, which can cover the cost of replacing lost or disaster-damaged real estate and personal property. These disaster loans cover losses not fully compensated by insurance or other recoveries and do not duplicate benefits of other agencies or organizations.

Follow us at:

[www.fema.gov/hurricane-maria](http://www.fema.gov/hurricane-maria)

[www.facebook.com/femapuertorico](https://www.facebook.com/femapuertorico)

[www.twitter.com/femaregion2](https://www.twitter.com/femaregion2)

The social media links provided are for reference only. FEMA does not endorse any non-government websites, companies or applications.



FEMA

Page 2 of 2