

CenterPoint Safety Tips

Safety Tips from CenterPoint Energy

“CenterPoint has been a great partner in our coordinated response to the damage in our community during the rain and subsequent flooding events of Hurricane Harley,” stated Alan Spears, of the Fort Bend County Office of Emergency Management. More than 842,000 restorations have been completed since Friday in Harris and surrounding counties. Currently 98.92% of CenterPoint customers have power and there are over 12,500 customers who are still impacted by high water and inaccessible to CenterPoint crews including approximately 1,000 Fort Bend County residents. CenterPoint wants to make sure residents remain safe as evacuations are lifted and their customers return to their homes. Please read these important safety tips.

ELECTRIC SAFETY TIPS

Stay Safe. Stay Connected. Stay Informed. When you return to your home after a flood there are a few important safety tips to be aware of to keep you and your family safe.

Stay away from downed power lines. Be especially mindful of downed lines that could be hidden in flood waters and debris and treat all downed lines as if they are energized or “live.” Boats being used in high water can expose you to danger from power lines at their normal height. Be aware and stay away.

DO NOT attempt to remove a tree limb or other debris from a power line. Once away from the area, call 713-207-2222 and we will respond as soon as it is safe to do so.

Power Restoration

- If you find that water has risen above your electrical outlets, you must call a licensed electrician before you turn on the main circuit breaker or turn on the power for any connected appliances, such as televisions, computers and more.
- Your electrician will assess the damage and will then need to ensure that your home’s electrical system is safe to receive power.
- Your electrician may need to either call CenterPoint Energy or direct you to call us at **713-207-2222** to ensure that it is safe to perform electrical work. CenterPoint Energy may temporarily disconnect service to your home to allow work to be performed.

- Even if you or your electrician calls and asks us to remotely disconnect service, there still could be voltage present. Therefore, we will ask the electrician and you to confirm you want us to proceed before going forward, and will remind you to take precautions around your breakers.
- CenterPoint Energy is responsible for and will make repairs to the electric delivery system up to where it connects to your home or business. However, you are responsible for repairs if there is damage to the meter box or weatherhead (where the line enters your home through a pipe).
- If the meter box or weatherhead is damaged, our crews will not be able to re-establish service. If in doubt, contact a licensed electrician now to make an inspection and any necessary repairs

Appliance and equipment safety

- All electrical appliances and electronic equipment that have been submerged in water must be dried thoroughly for at least one week. Then, you should have them checked by a qualified repair professional before turning them on.
- Do not try to repair a flood-damaged appliance as it could result in electrical shock or death. Attempting to restart it could result in further damage and costly repairs.
- If the outside unit of your air conditioning system has been under water, the controls may have mud and water accumulated in them. Have the unit inspected by a qualified air conditioning technician before using it.
- Never connect a portable electric generator or a motor home/RV generator directly to your home's electrical system during a power outage. Electricity could back feed into the power lines and endanger repair workers.
- **Call 811 before any digging is started** – it's the law. Striking buried utility lines can cause serious injury or death. Alert participating utility companies, such as electric, gas, cable and phone about planned digging so they can mark the appropriate location of their underground lines. Please be prepared for a longer than usual wait time during the next few weeks, and do not dig until the lines have been marked.

NATURAL GAS SAFETY TIPS

- Do not turn off your natural gas service at the meter; doing so could allow water to enter the natural gas lines.
- Be alert for the smell of natural gas - It smells like rotten eggs. If you do smell natural gas, leave the area immediately on foot and tell others to leave, too.
- Do NOT turn on your lights, smoke, strike a match, use a cell phone or operate anything that might cause a spark, including a flashlight or a generator.
- Do not attempt to turn natural gas valves on or off. Once you are safely away from the area, call **888-876-5786**. Once it is safe, CenterPoint Energy will send a trained service technician.
- If your home was flooded, call a licensed plumber or gas appliance technician to inspect your appliances and gas piping to make sure they are in good operating condition before calling CenterPoint Energy to reconnect service. This includes outdoor gas appliances including pool heaters, gas grills and gas lights.
- **Call 811 before any digging is started** – it's the law. Striking buried utility lines can cause serious injury or death. Alert participating utility companies, such as electric, gas, cable and phone about planned digging so they can mark the appropriate location of their underground lines. Please be prepared for a longer than usual wait time during the next few weeks, and do not dig until the lines have been marked.

- Be aware of where your natural gas meter is located. As debris is put out for heavy trash pickup, make sure it is placed away from the meter. In many areas the meter may be located near the curb. If debris is near a gas meter, the mechanized equipment used by trash collectors could pull up the meter, damaging it and causing a potentially hazardous situation. If this happens, leave the area immediately and call CenterPoint Energy at 888-876-5786. • Visit CenterPointEnergy.com/StormCenter for natural gas safety tips and other resources.