

Next Round of Wintry Weather Moving In

Written by Steve Frank
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Bad weather in the forecast, and schools are taking note. Many Piedmont schools have already scheduled early release, and now Avery, Ashe and Watauga Schools are closing for the day, along with other schools in our area. Meanwhile, Blue Ridge Electric Membership Corporation is on high alert and employees are monitoring severe winter weather of sleet, freezing rain and snow predicted for the cooperative's service area in the mountains and foothills of northwest North Carolina. If members have an outage, they should report it over the cooperative's PowerLine at 1-800-448-2383. Employees are on standby, ready to respond in full force at any time of the day or night should outages occur. Blue Ridge Electric offers the following tips to help members stay comfortable and safe should an outage occur. Have the following supplies on hand in a location that each member of the household can locate quickly:

- Flashlights and fresh batteries
- Matches with firewood and kindling or
- A grill with extra propane charcoal and lighter fluid
- Radio with fresh batteries to listen to weather and news reports
- Extra blankets, sleeping bags, quilts
- Oil lamps and extra oil
- Wind-up or battery operated clock
- Non-perishable food
- Manual can opener
- Paper plates and plastic utensils
- Bottled water or gallon jugs filled with water for drinking and cooking
- Formula and extra diapers for babies
- Thermos for keeping drinks and baby formula warm
- Emergency numbers such as Blue Ridge Electric's PowerLine, local emergency management, police and hospital contacts.

Additionally, if you require a regular medication, be sure to keep extra supplies on hand. If you or a family member requires oxygen, it's a good idea to have a back-up power source and a personal emergency plan that includes family, friends or local emergency management sources to assist you if needed.