

How to Prepare for a Power Outage

Stay safe, stay ready, and stay connected—even when the lights go out.

Whether it's a storm, a blown transformer, or unexpected maintenance, power outages can happen at any time. The good news? A little preparation goes a long way in making sure you and your household stay comfortable and safe.

Your Power Outage Checklist

Keep these essentials on hand and prep ahead of time:

- **Flashlights** with fresh batteries (avoid candles if possible for fire safety)
- **Charged power banks** for phones and small devices
- **One gallon of water per person, per day** (for at least 3 days)
- **Non-perishable food** and a manual can opener
- **Basic hygiene items** and a small first aid kit
- **Alternative heat or cooling sources** (blankets, battery-powered fans, etc.)
- **Battery-powered or hand-crank radio** to stay updated
- **List of emergency contacts** written down
- **Extra medications** and backup supplies for special needs
- **Pet food and supplies** if you have animals

Helpful Tips

- **Unplug major appliances** to prevent damage from power surges when electricity is restored.
- **Keep fridge and freezer doors closed** as much as possible—your fridge can keep food cold for about 4 hours, and a full freezer up to 48 hours.
- **Use generators safely**—never run one indoors or in an enclosed space.
- **Stay informed** by following our updates on Facebook.
- **Switch to low-power mode** and close background apps, if your phone is low on battery—it'll help you stay connected longer during an outage.



Board Member Feature

Paul Craven



What unique skills or experiences do you bring to the board? I bring a mix of tech experience and community connection that I think is pretty unique. I've spent over 15 years working in the tech industry and just as long teaching computer science, which gives me a solid understanding of both how technology works and how to explain it in ways that make sense to different audiences. I also hold a Ph.D. in computer science and have published research in computer security—especially around securing hardware devices, which is becoming more important every day.

On the personal side, my family has deep roots in Indianola. We've lived here for generations (some people may remember the Pemble hardware store) and have always been involved in serving the community. That connection gives me a strong sense of what matters to people here, and I'm passionate about helping make a positive impact.

I think that combination of technical know-how and local perspective puts me in a great position to contribute to the board in a meaningful way.

What initially drew you to join the board of IMU? I've always loved Indianola—it's home. Joining the IMU board felt like a great way to give back and help make this town an even better place to live. I'm especially interested in how technology and engineering can be used to serve people, and IMU is right at the heart of that.

I also really enjoy explaining things and helping people understand how stuff works, so being part of the board gives me a chance to do that in a meaningful way. Plus, it's a great opportunity to connect with more folks in the community and hear what matters to them.

What do you enjoy doing in your free time? I've gone through a lot of hobbies over the years—probably the biggest ones were weather tracking and hot air ballooning, which were both a lot of fun. These days, I'm into things like D&D, reading, biking, playing guitar, and cooking. I also spend time working on an open-source engine for making 2D games, which combines my love of software and creativity.

And of course, I've got a couple of dogs who make sure I never forget to take breaks—they demand a lot of attention and keep things lively around the house!

What are your hopes for the future of IMU? I'd love to see IMU continue to be something people don't have to worry about—just dependable utilities that are always there when you need them. I also think it's important that pricing stays competitive, so folks feel like they're getting good value without overpaying.

Looking ahead, I hope IMU keeps planning smart for the future—so we're not caught off guard by growth or aging equipment. Staying ahead of those challenges means fewer surprises and smoother service for everyone.

And just as important, I want IMU to be a great place to work. When employees feel supported and valued, it shows in the quality of service and the strength of the organization.



What is a GFCI?

GFCIs prevent electrical shock by detecting current variations and cutting off power if a shock is sensed.

They should be installed near water sources in and outside the home.

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IMU RESOURCES

Online bill pay: my.imufiber.com/ebill/login
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IMU board meetings: youtube.com/@indianolamunicipalutilities
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