

Feb 09

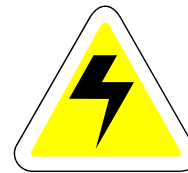
# YOUR UTILITIES IN A DISASTER



*When disaster strikes, it often affects one or more utility systems in our homes. It is important to know where the main controls are located as well as how – and whether – to turn them off.*

**Taking it one step at a time.**

**ELECTRICITY** - A disaster can disrupt your electrical service or cause wires and electrical fixtures to separate, creating a shock and fire hazard:



### Before a disaster occurs:

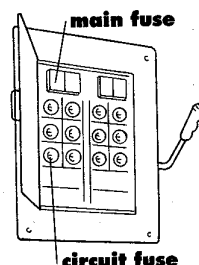
- ↯ Locate your main electrical panel or fuse box. Usually it's on an interior wall near your electric meter.
- ↯ If your residence has a fuse box, maintain a supply of spare fuses of the correct amperage.
- ↯ Always keep a working flashlight available, with extra batteries of the correct size and type.

**When you lose power**, check the fuses and/or circuit breakers to be sure the trouble is not in your household electric system.

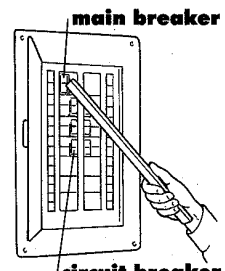
- ↯ **Turn off** all electrical equipment (e.g., water heater, electric furnace, TV/computer, appliances) to prevent system overload when the power is restored.
- ↯ **Turn on** a porch light and one inside light so you and utility crews will know when service is restored.
- ↯ If you have to step in water to get to the fuse box or circuit breaker, call an electrician first for advice.
- ↯ If a generator is used as backup power supply, remember to follow the manufacturer's instructions. Connect lights and appliances directly to the generator and not the electrical system.

**If you see sparks** or broken/frayed wires or if you smell hot insulation, shut off your electricity immediately.

- ↯ For a circuit breaker panel - Shut off the electricity by turning all circuit breaker switches to the "off" position.
- ↯ For a fuse box, pull out the two main (cartridge) fuses.



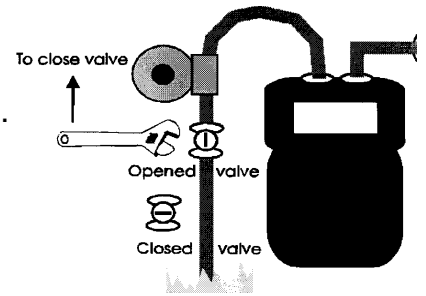
**Fuse Boxes**



**Breaker Boxes**

**NATURAL GAS** - Any odor of natural gas inside your home might indicate a leak. If you smell natural gas or hear blowing or a hissing noise, open a window and quickly leave the building. Turn off your gas at the meter as soon as possible:

- ↓ Locate the shut-off valve.
- ↓ Use a crescent wrench and turn the rectangular knob one quarter turn clockwise to the horizontal position.
- ↓ Call your gas company from a neighbor's home.
- ↓ If you turn off the gas for any reason, service should be restored by a professional.



***If you suspect a gas leak:***

***DON'T*** use your telephone. This includes cellular phones and all types of portable communication and electronic devices that have a battery. These can spark and create a source of ignition.

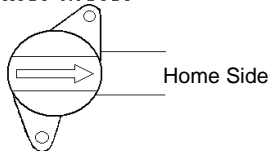
***DON'T*** use matches, lighters, or open flame appliances and don't operate electrical switches.

**WATER** - Earthquakes and freezing weather can rupture water pipes, causing flooding if not turned off quickly. Find the location of your home's shut off valve

- ↓ There is a shut off valve at the water meter, but there may also be one closer to your house.
- ↓ Some common places to look for your master shut off valve are:
  - In the crawl space or basement where the water line enters the house.
  - In the garage where the water line enters the wall or ceiling, near the water heater, or by the clothes washer hookup.
  - Outside, near the foundations of your home, possibly protected by a concrete or clay pipe ring.

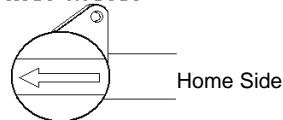
*If you don't find a hand-operated master shut off valve, have one installed on the house side of the meter. It may come in handy.*

**Water Meter**

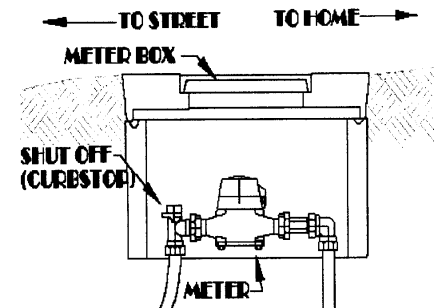


**Open / On**

**Water Meter**



**Closed / Off**



**For additional information, contact Yamhill County Emergency Management: 503-474-7340**