



## Checklist: Winter Storm Recovery In Texas and Southern States

### What Should You Do Now?

*Steps to Safely Recover From the Storm and Outages*



- You may need to restart your furnace after the power is restored.
- Don't attempt to fix a boiler if it's been exposed to water. Call a pro.



- If your electrical system has been exposed to water, get it inspected for safety before use.
- Don't enter a flooded home if the electricity is connected. Even during an outage, the wires in your neighborhood could be charged by an improperly connected generator.



- Turn off the water supply and stop leaks as soon as possible.
- Leave faucets open to release water pressure.
- Use a space heater to melt ice and keep cabinet doors open to help warm air circulate.
- Call a plumber.



- Pump out water from flooded basements and crawl spaces.
- Dry out areas quickly to avoid mold and structural damage as drywall and framing absorb water.
- You may want to clean flooded surfaces with a bleach solution to prevent the growth of pathogens.

### How Should You Plan Ahead?

*Protect Your Home Against Future Winter Damage*

- Be prepared by getting a portable propane heater that's safe for indoor use.

- Install a backup home generator and learn how to use it safely.
- Add a battery backup for appliances essential to recovery like sump pumps.

- Add insulation and/or heat tape to water pipes and hot water heaters.
- Pay attention to risky infrastructure such as water heaters in an uninsulated attic or water pipes in uninsulated walls.
- Consider updating plumbing to be more resilient to extreme weather.
- Improve the home's thermal efficiency so it stays warm in the winter and cool in the summer.

- Install an automatic sump pump with a backup battery.
- Improve drainage, gutters, and downspouts.



- Ensure that gutters and downspouts are clear and continue to direct water away from your foundation.
- Make sure neighborhood storm drains are clear.
- Repair foundation cracks, add basement waterproofing, and install interior drains.
- Improve home drainage systems and yard grading.



- Backups happen more frequently in cold weather, so be cautious.
- Install backflow valves to prevent sewer backups from flowing into your home.



- Continue to boil water until authorities say it's safe.
- After long power outages, refrigerated or frozen foods will be unsafe to consume.
- Keep bottled water and packaged food on hand, as you would in preparation for a hurricane.



- Don't use generators indoors and be alert to other carbon monoxide poisoning risks.
- Remember that water and electricity are a dangerous combination. When in doubt, call a pro.
- Look for tree limbs that have been damaged by ice and could fall onto roofs or wires.
- Test or replace your smoke alarm and carbon monoxide alarm.
- Add safety gear to your home, including a fire extinguisher and first aid kit.



- File an insurance claim for flooding. Take photos of the damage and save your receipts.
- Homeowner's insurance generally covers damage caused by burst pipes.
- Flood insurance deals with home floods that originate from external sources such as snowmelt.
- You may be able to get reimbursement for spoiled food from some power companies or insurance policies.
- Check if you need additional insurance coverage or flood insurance.
- Look for tax incentives to improve energy efficiency, such as switching to Energy Star appliances and improving home insulation.
- Many flood insurance policies will contribute \$1,000 toward the purchase of a sump pump for at-risk homes.

Need help with **basement waterproofing, crawl space encapsulation, sump pumps, or foundation repair**? Get a free inspection from your local Groundworks experts.