

Energy Blackout Preparedness Checklist for European Retail and Wholesale

EuroCommerce has collected a set of measures developed and applied by its members across Europe to prepare for a blackout, along with action elsewhere. This paper is designed to offer a resource from which members can draw in seeking measures which might help them before, during and after a blackout.

Measures

The following are examples of steps taken by companies in our sector which may be helpful to members looking for ideas on how to add to their existing toolbox of measures to reduce the impacts of non-deliberate and planned energy blackouts.

Prevention Measures

Blackout prevention the N.1 priority.

See [energy savings best practices](#) in European Retail and wholesale.

Checklist for business continuity

Preparing for a blackout

Prepare your employees

- Raise awareness among your employees.
- Forme a crisis management team and a crisis management plan, with clear role and responsibilities within the business. Make sure you always have printed copies for key employees.
- Prepare a leaflet for the business' employees listing the emergency numbers (police, firefighters, paramedics etc) and contact national authorities (civil protection). Make sure you always have printed copies for key employees.
- Create an emergency communication system that works without the use of external power.

Prepare your business

- Back up critical documents and electronic files in a cloud-based system. Keep core business data, contact lists, floor plans, and other critical information in the cloud ensures the crisis team has everything it might need.
- Purchase backup power generations. It is important to research how these generators work, including how long they will last when an outage occurs and how much is their power capacity.
- Prepare for efficient ventilation systems for possible creation of carbon monoxide. Especially regarding the use of back-up generators, make sure proper ventilation is in place is necessary.
- Purchase backup batteries for cell phones or laptops.

- Store safe drinking water on-site.
- Prepare alternatives to electronic locking systems and gates to be open manually.

Preparing your business for a planned black-out

- Change the defrost schedule of the refrigerators, so that they will not defrost during the black-out.
- Increase the production of ice in refrigerators.
- Leave more products in refrigerators.
- Leave the refrigerators and freezers closed as much as possible to save the cooling of products.

During a blackout

- Turn off and unplug all electrical equipment to avoid damage from power spikes.
- Identify systems (IT, electronics etc) that need to be decoupled from the grid to protect them against damages when the grid is restarted.
- Ensure safety in connecting back-up generators (if manual connection is needed).
- Leave refrigerators and freezers closed as much as possible to save the cooling of products.
- Use a flashlight for emergency lighting. Avoid candles for safety reasons.
- Contact your electric company and notify them of the outage.
- Identify essential personnel that needs to be present on the premises. If returning home for other employees is not possible, make arrangements for hosting all present employees.
- Contact emergency numbers if needed (police, firefighters, paramedics etc) and contact national authorities (civil protection).
- If possible, agree a uniform procedure with your national authorities, cities and municipalities and the most important local partners.
 - (For food retailers) ensure continued availability of food to the population in a safe manner (e.g., only essential employees working on the premises, no individuals allowed on the premises, distribution of goods from the door accessing the premises).

Recovery procedures after a blackout

It should be expected that our sector's electricity will be re-established as a priority for essential services and their distribution by national authorities.

- Contact emergency numbers to make sure it is safe to restart business activities.
- Call the power company to check if any problem has resulted to the power grid, and if so, making sure it is repaired and all safety measures are taken in due account.
- Check for electrical hazards before returning to normal businesses activities.
- Ensure safety in connecting again the electrical appliances needed in the business.
- Ensure caution when re-uploading all the business systems online to avoid risking a power surge.
- Coordinate with business partners and your employees.
- Discard the products that are not safe anymore due to prolonged blackouts.

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