

# AUSTIN UTILITIES NOW

INFORMATION ABOUT YOUR CITY SERVICES



DEC-45382

## Five ways to stay ready this winter

Cooler temperatures are usually welcome in Central Texas. But winter weather can be unpredictable, bringing ice, wind and the potential for power outages. Austin Energy works year-round to improve reliability and prepare for emergencies. Here are five easy steps you can take to be ready for whatever this season brings.

### 1. Sign up for Outage Alerts.

Text **REG** to **287846** and follow the prompts. Everyone in your household with a cell phone can sign up.

### 2. Know the three ways to report an outage.

- Online at [outagemap.austinenenergy.com](http://outagemap.austinenenergy.com).
- Text **OUT** to **287846**.
- Call **512-322-9100**.

### 3. Check out the Outage Map.

Visit [outagemap.austinenenergy.com](http://outagemap.austinenenergy.com) to find information about outages near

you. Get to know the Outage Map before an outage happens.

### 4. Update your contact info.

In an emergency, Austin Energy will send important information to the contact info you provide. Log into your account at [COAUtilities.com](http://COAUtilities.com) or call **512-494-9400** to verify your cell phone number and email address.

### 5. Make an emergency kit.

Include things like flashlights, batteries, bottled water and a first aid kit, along with items specific to your household. Maybe those include diapers, pet food, extra prescription meds or puzzles to keep the kids entertained. The best emergency plan is one that is tailored to you.

Find more safety tips and resources at [austinenenergy.com/outage](http://austinenenergy.com/outage).



## Get Ready. Stay Ready.

Know what to do in case of an outage.



## Prepare your home for freezing weather

Austin Water urges customers to take steps to prepare for cold temperatures. Here's what you can do to help prevent property damage this winter:

- » **Locate your water shutoff.** Make sure everyone in your residence knows the location of the main water shutoff valve. Always keep it clear of debris and obstacles. For most homes, the shutoff valve is on your side of the water meter at the meter box.
- » **Keep out cold air.** Tightly close doors and windows to the outside and repair any that are broken or drafty. Seal all leaks in crawl spaces and basements.
- » **Take care of exposed pipes and water heaters.** Insulate pipes in unheated areas, such as an attic or garage. Check manufacturer recommendations for your tanked and tankless water heaters.
- » **Check outside faucets.** Turn off outside faucets, remove all hoses and wrap faucets with towels or a Styrofoam insulator. Turn off and drain automatic sprinkler systems.

For more information and instructional videos on how to prepare for winter, visit [austinwater.org](http://austinwater.org).



## Recycle your holiday tree

Starting Dec. 26, City of Austin curbside customers can recycle their natural holiday trees at the curb. Just set out your tree by 5:30 a.m. on your scheduled composting collection day.

### When recycling, remember:

- » Only natural trees are accepted.
- » Trees sprayed with artificial snow are not accepted.
- » Remove all lights, tree stands, ornaments and decorations.
- » Do not place trees in bags.
- » Trees taller than six feet should be cut in half.

For more information, visit [austintexas.gov/treerecycling](http://austintexas.gov/treerecycling).

# Essential winter maintenance tips for a safe, cozy home

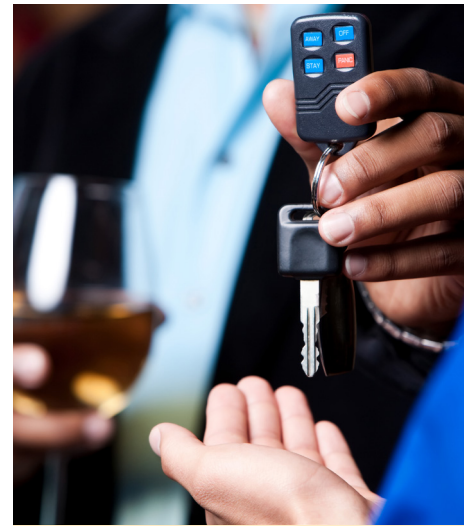
As winter approaches, now is the perfect time to get your home ready. Taking a few proactive steps during the fall can help prevent costly repairs, keep your family safe, and ensure a safe winter season.

Here's a maintenance checklist to help prepare your home for winter:

- » **Heating.** Ensure your furnace or other heating sources are operating properly. Make sure heating equipment can keep habitable spaces at least 68°F.
- » **Water.** Check visible pipes for leaks and check water temperature. Ensure hot water is at least 110°F.
- » **Tree.** Remove dead limbs and check for hazards before winter weather arrives. Work with a certified arborist to protect tree health. Remove leaves and debris from gutters.



- » **Home exterior check.** Check outer walls, windows and roof for any damage or leaks that should be repaired before cold weather arrives. Look for signs of pests.
- » **Smoke and CO alarms.** Ensure smoke and carbon monoxide alarms are operating. If battery-operated, replace batteries before winter. Learn more about preparing for winter weather at [austintexas.gov/safeandsound](https://austintexas.gov/safeandsound).




## Get home safe for the holidays

Make your holidays both merry and safe. Plan a safe ride home before going out during the holidays using these tips:

- » **Try transit.** Use the CapMetro Trip Planner to familiarize yourself with local routes and schedules before the party.
- » **Ride the Night Owl.** Rely on this late-night bus service that runs between downtown and local neighborhoods.
- » **Tap the app.** Make sure you have a taxi service or ride-sharing app saved on your phone.
- » **Park overnight.** If you leave your car overnight in a City of Austin public parking spot and save the receipt showing you took a safe trip home, the City will waive your parking ticket.


Remember, between legal fees and fines, a DWI can cost up to \$17,000, but a ride-share only costs around \$40 and a bus ride is \$1.25. Find the ticket waiver form and more tips at: [austintexas.gov/gethomesafe](https://austintexas.gov/gethomesafe).



### Austin winters aren't the same, but I am prepared.

The climate is changing.  
So are my emergency plans.

**Get Ready Central Texas** Start your preparedness journey at [ReadyCentralTexas.org](https://ReadyCentralTexas.org)



## Give the Gift of Comfort

Make a **utility bill payment** for a family member, friend, or neighbor who may be struggling financially.

Or, help others in our community with a donation to our **Plus 1 Fund**.

Learn how at [COAutilities.com/go/howtohelp](https://COAutilities.com/go/howtohelp)



## Be careful with holiday lights and extension cords

Incandescent holiday lights release 90 percent of their energy as heat, which can cause fires. LED lights don't release as much heat, but hooking up LEDs doesn't mean you're off the hook. Remember to check your outlets and plugs for damaged or frayed wires. Lastly: Don't connect extension cords to other extension cords. Use an approved power strip instead.

Para obtener una copia en español de esta publicación, visite [coautilities.com/go/utilitynews](https://coautilities.com/go/utilitynews).

Customer Service Phone: 512-494-9400

24-Hour Power Outage Reporting: 512-322-9100 | 24-Hour Emergency Water Service: 512-972-1000

North Austin Utility Customer Service Center (Walk-in Center): 8716 Research Blvd., Ste. 115

South Austin Utility Customer Service Center (Walk-in Center): 1901 W. William Cannon Drive, Ste. 100

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