

Woodlands County Wildfire Evacuation: Returning Home Guidance

Power has been out in affected areas since approximately 4:30 p.m. on May 11, 2026.

We recognize that returning home after a wildfire evacuation can be stressful. FortisAlberta crews work closely with emergency responders to restore power safely when conditions allow. This information is intended to help you prepare your home as you return and safely resume normal activities.

Power Restoration: What to Expect

Some areas may have been de-energized during the evacuation as a safety protocol. Before electricity is restored in these areas, FortisAlberta crews inspect power lines and equipment to confirm it is safe to re-energize the system. This process helps reduce the risk of additional damage or safety hazards.

When returning home:

- » Check that your power is on when you return home. If your home does not have power, **contact FortisAlberta at 310-WIRE (9473). To ensure your safety, power will not be restored automatically to areas that were de-energized during the evacuation.**
- » Some areas may remain without power longer depending on wildfire damage and safety conditions.
- » Ensure all appliances, such as stovetops, kettles, irons and space heaters, are turned off before power is restored.
- » To reduce risk, you can turn your home's main breaker to the "off" position so any appliances left on do not pose a safety hazard.

Important:

If you see damaged electrical equipment, downed lines, or anything that looks unsafe, stay back and report it to FortisAlberta immediately.

Food Safety After an Extended Power Outage

If your home was without power for more than 24 hours, food safety is an important consideration.

Refrigerators:

- » Perishable food (meat, poultry, fish, dairy, leftovers) should be discarded if the refrigerator was without power for more than 24 hours.
- » When in doubt, throw it out. Food that looks or smells normal may still be unsafe.

Freezers:

- » Food in the freezer may remain safe longer if it stayed frozen.
- » If food has thawed and feels warm to touch, it should be discarded.
- » Refrozen food may be safe but could have reduced quality.

Pantry Items:

- » Shelf-stable foods (canned goods, dry goods) are generally safe if packaging is intact.
- » Discard items that were exposed to heat, smoke, water, or have damaged packaging.

Cleaning After Power Is Restored

- » Once electricity is back on:
- » Clean and sanitize refrigerators and freezers before restocking.
- » Wash surfaces that may have been exposed to smoke or ash.
- » Run water for a few minutes before use if your home was vacant for an extended period.

Turning Power Back on Safely

When power is restored:

- » Turn appliances back on gradually to avoid overloading circuits.
- » Check major appliances (furnace, water heater, refrigerator) to ensure they are operating properly.
- » If breakers trip repeatedly, contact a qualified electrician.

We're Here to Help

FortisAlberta understands the challenges customers face following wildfire evacuations. Our crews continue working to restore power safely while supporting community recovery.

For outage updates or to report safety concerns:

- » Contact FortisAlberta's customer care team at **310-WIRE** (9473) if you have any questions.