

Plan Ahead to Keep Your Technology Powered

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The recent severe winter weather that impacted millions of people in Texas and across the United States has reminded us of the importance of planning ahead for inclement weather and staying connected with loved ones. Nicole Nguyen of the Wall Street Journal recently wrote a great piece [2] (paid subscription required) on extra steps to take ahead of time with your smart devices in the event of an outage. Below is a summary of a few of her tips, as well as a couple of important takeaways for organizing your financial affairs.

Check Your Emergency Alerts

Most phones created after 2012 can receive Wireless Emergency Alerts. These messages include government alerts related to weather and other important notifications. Check your device settings to make sure you are receiving these timely alerts. Additionally, you can set yourself up to receive alerts from your electricity provider such as power outage updates.

Download Map Data for Offline Use

Map applications such as Google Maps allow users to download map data for offline usage in the event of no phone data or Wi-Fi coverage. This is a great step to take in case you need to navigate somewhere without having access to data. Your phone's GPS can still be utilized even without a data connection.

Keep Your Devices Powered Up

Thinking ahead before inclement weather is crucial to prolonging usage of your smartphone. Not only should you consider making sure your devices are fully charged before bad weather, but you should also consider backup power options such as a generator or portable power station. While portable options offer less power than generators, they are compact, quiet, and easy to charge. The best option will depend on your power needs.

Maintain Access to Your Financial Accounts

Keeping your smart device charged can have a financial component too. It's important to keep a handle of your financial accounts such as bank accounts and any updates from those institutions on their contingency plans during severe weather. Your financial institutions should have an app to securely access your information. Having phone numbers for these institutions on hand is prudent as well.

Keep Important Planning Documents Organized and Accessible

Know where your important documents are stored and consider keeping in a secure electronic format to be accessed via your device. For example, while estate planning and severe weather aren't fun to think about together, it's important to have access to documents such as healthcare legal documents in the event of a medical emergency. These documents can be securely stored in an electronic document portal. Consider also having hard copies in an accessible place.

Keeping your smart devices charged, as well as having a good handle on accessing your accounts, could prove to be very helpful in the event of severe weather. Your loved ones will appreciate your extra preparation too!

For more personal financial tips, [check out our Bright Blogs.](#) [3]

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