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## Winter Warmth When the Grid is Down

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*by Sarah Duncan*



I live in a Northern climate in a home without a fireplace. The heat in my home is totally dependent on the [grid](#) <sup>[1]</sup>. Since the weather is cold here at least 8 months out of the year, much of my prepping attention is focused on keeping the family warm.

In years gone by, most Northern homes had either a fireplace or a woodstove for heat. Our society has become so certain that the grid is permanent that many homes built over the past 50-60 years have been designed without those vital elements.

The first and best choice for alternative heating is wood. If you don't have that

option, don't despair – there are many other ways to stay warm if the grid goes down.

1.) **Propane Heaters:** There are several propane heaters on the market that do not require electricity. I own a [Little Buddy heater](#) <sup>[2]</sup>. These small portable heaters are considered safe for indoor use in 49 states. They attach to a small propane canister and use 2 oz. of fuel per hour to make 250 square feet extremely warm and toasty. A battery operated carbon monoxide detector provides an extra measure of safety when using these heaters indoors.

2.) **Kerosene/Oil Heaters:** Kerosene heaters burn a wick for heat, fuelled by the addition of heating oil. An antique "[Perfection](#)" <sup>[3]</sup> oil heater can be a charming addition to your decor that can be called into service during a grid-down situation. Click [here](#) <sup>[4]</sup> to read more information about the different types of kerosene heaters that are available.

Of course, the above options require fuel that may not be available after an extended disaster. Use a combination of these keep-warm strategies to extend your fuel provisions.

- Seal off a smaller area to heat. When our furnace went out one winter, we huddled into a small room with just one window. We closed the door to the bedroom and used a folded quilt at the bottom to better insulate the room. You can also hang heavy quilts in the doorways of rooms with a heat source to block them off from the rest of the house.
- Insulate your windows. You can use a plastic shower curtain and duct tape, topped by a heavy quilt to keep the wind from whistling through your windows. This has the added benefit of keeping the windows dark if you are concerned about OPSEC.
- Light some candles. Burning candles can add some much needed warmth to a small area.
- Use heavy sleeping bags. Zipping into a sleeping bag will conserve your body's warmth more than simply getting under the covers.
- Pitch a tent. This works especially well when you have children because it adds an element of fun to an otherwise stressful situation. Inside a tent, you can combine your body heat to stay much warmer.

- Heat some rocks. If you have a place outdoors for a cooking fire, you can add large rocks to the fire. Rocks retain heat for a very long time. When you are ready to go to bed, move the rocks into a cast iron Dutch oven. VERY CAREFULLY take this into the room that you are heating. The stones will emit heat for several hours. This is an excellent way to passively heat your room when you're sleeping. With this method, you don't have to be concerned about the potential of a fire or carbon monoxide poisoning during the night.
- Dress warmly from head to toe. Most body heat is lost through the top of the head, so always start with a warm knit hat. Layer your clothing, making sure your chest and neck are covered with a scarf. Lightweight gloves will also help you maintain your warmth. Wear heavy socks and shoes to protect your feet from cold floors.
- Cook! If your cooking method does not require electricity, use it to generate heat as well as a hot nourishing meal. The addition of steam also makes the house warmer – add a kettle of water to the top of your stove.
- Drink warm beverages – hot cocoa, coffee or tea can increase your body temperature.
- Snuggle! Combine your body heat to stay warmer
- Use a hot water bottle. This can provide additional moist radiant heat in your tent or closed-off room.

In your search for warmth make certain that you also maintain safety. Keep fire extinguishers handy and invest in a battery operated carbon monoxide detector. Keep children and pets away from items that could burn them or that could tip over, causing a fire. Be sure to store all flammable materials (such as propane and kerosene) according to manufacturer's instructions.

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URLs in this post:

[1] grid: [http://readynutrition.com/resources/when-the-grid-goes-down-you-better-be-ready\\_10022012/](http://readynutrition.com/resources/when-the-grid-goes-down-you-better-be-ready_10022012/)

[2] Little Buddy heater: <http://www.mrheater.com/ProductFamily.aspx?catid=41>

[3] Perfection: [http://www.milesstair.com/Perfection\\_History.htm](http://www.milesstair.com/Perfection_History.htm)

[4] here: [http://www.endtimesreport.com/kerosene\\_heaters.html](http://www.endtimesreport.com/kerosene_heaters.html)

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