

“Without electricity, how would my day-to-day life be different?” Well, I have observed many power outages in my community, and have compensated for the loss of electricity. My life completely without electricity for a whole week would be different in many ways, though.

I can faintly remember the four day power outage in April 2005, and how we carried on our day-to-day activities. Not being prepared for an outage, we didn't have a working generator until the power had been out for at least a day. Even after the generator was working, we had to choose necessities to run on it, like the two freezers, the fridge, and the plumbing. The oven in our house is run on propane gas so we were able to use it without electricity to heat and cook. I can remember my mom heating water on the stove and mixing it in with cold water for us to bathe in. Luckily, we keep extra distilled water for cooking and consumption in our basement, so we didn't have to worry about drinking water. I remember seeing the huge generators that Big Flat Electric brought in so that we could have school at Turner while the broken power poles were being fixed. I was grateful that they had back-up resources so we wouldn't miss any more school. Viewing the power poles splintered like toothpicks definitely made me respect the weather and the people that worked to restore power to our community.

During each power outage, we have found ways to entertain ourselves without electricity. Oftentimes, it is later in the day when the power goes out and we are all in the house when it happens. My family and I have gathered together and played games like Taboo and Pictionary. Other times, we tell stories by candlelight or make up funny tales. When my brothers and I were younger, we would play hide-n-seek, flashlight tag, or sniper. The only time that we really realized the absence of electricity was when we got bored and wanted to watch TV.

Not having electricity for a week would greatly change my day-to-day life. Sure, we had backup generators, but after a while that would get expensive and become a hardship keeping them running. The worse-case scenario would be during the middle of winter in a blizzard if the power went out and the whole county lost electricity. It could affect people in the country as well as people in the towns. It would be different if only Hogeland lost power for a week. During the weekdays, I would get up in the dark and leave the house without even getting ready for school. Most likely the school would let my family and I use the locker rooms to shower and get ready. Eating would be simple with the school cafeteria for breakfast and lunch. Dinner would be eaten in town before we left to return home for the night. At home we would wear extra clothes and run the gas oven to stay warm and rely on candles, flashlights, and kerosene lamps to light the house. We would have to use flashlights to do everything outside and the generator would be needed to water the cows. On weekends, we would definitely use the generator more because we would be home. However, many of our daily routines, such as washing and cleaning would go unattended due to the lack of electricity.