

Dealing With Electric Grid Disruption

Post by “Julia” of May 13, 2024 at 4:22 AM

[Quote from Julia](#)

We can easily carry our belongings in a 3rd rate backpack for weeks and weeks, if we have to — sore shoulders aren't fatal.

(Somehow I couldn't edit my post, so this is a bit of a PS:) I do realise this was an overly sweeping generalisation. I wrote that much more for rhetoric than for face value, so please consider it a dramatic introduction to the sentence following it.

During the very first moments of a blackout there might (or might not...) still be SMS (technically a repurposed control channel of the cellular towers) or even mobile data. Many towers have small buffer batteries; but they only last a couple of minutes, there'd be data congestion once everyone is suddenly using it, and eventually the backbone network will shutdown anyway. OK, so what's the point then? Here's my thought: I always know quite exactly where my cell phone is, anyway. So when the power would go out, the very first and indeed *immediate* thing I would do is text a friend who lives 200km (125mi) away, in another city but still in the same “grid district” (same high-voltage distribution network). She would do the same. If we get each other's text, we can be among the first to know with certainty it is a wide-spread (hence probably longer) thing. So while everyone else is getting cozy lighting candles, we'd get a move on, grab our gear, and leave the city perimeter. Under ideal conditions, we could clear the city by the time the first emergency radio broadcast is transmitted (potentially causing an initial flare of chaos). But we might both be sleeping. Or only one text might get through (in which case the other one would still benefit; still a win!). Or none might get through at all (in which case, at least we both saved five minutes worth of candle wax! 😊).

You might be able to adapt the underlying idea? Maybe there are (somewhat) younger friends who don't live too far away? Or maybe there are other folks, who would be similarly stranded? There is usually strength in numbers, and sometimes discussing things ahead of time can maximise the benefit 😊