

111 Contact Code

As consumers move away from using the old copper telephone network to using new technologies such as fibre, they may become vulnerable by being unable to call 111 during a power cut. This is because unlike copper, newer technologies rely on electricity in the home to work.

We are developing safeguards to make sure vulnerable consumers have an appropriate way of contacting 111 in the event of a power cut, by creating a new 111 Contact Code.

Appropriate ways to call 111 in a power cut

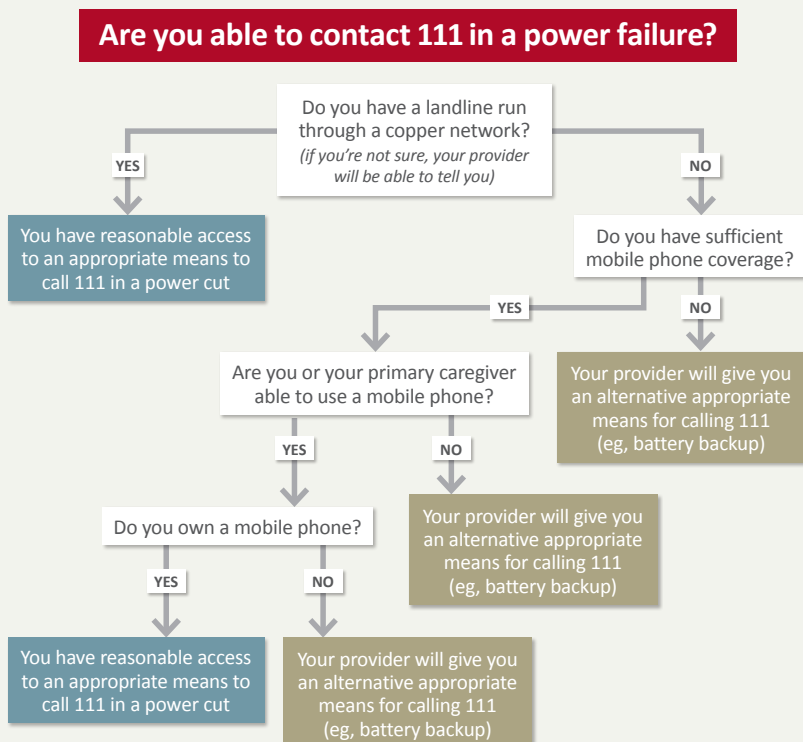
75% of 111 calls are made from mobile phones, so we think a mobile phone is a good option for calling 111 in the event of a power cut. The mobile network also covers most of New Zealand and charged mobile phones can continue to operate on battery for a period of time following a power cut.

However, mobile networks do not have 100% coverage and not everyone has a mobile phone. In these cases, we think battery backups could be provided to vulnerable consumers to keep their landlines going in the event of a power cut.



How should we determine who is vulnerable?

We propose to test if a consumer is vulnerable based on the technology they have access to and whether it will work during a power cut. This means that everyone should have the ability to call 111 in a power cut. This flowchart shows how this could work:



How the code will protect consumers

Your telecommunications provider will be required to:

- Inform you of options available for calling 111 during a power cut.
- Supply customers who are vulnerable with an appropriate way of calling 111 in a power cut (eg, mobile phone or battery backup).

How you can protect yourself:

- If you have a mobile phone, make sure it is always charged.
- If you use a cordless phone for your landline, consider having a corded phone handy to use in the event of a power cut.

QUESTIONS

What do you think of our approach to ensure that everyone has an appropriate way to call 111 in a power cut?

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How else could we protect vulnerable consumers who may need to call 111 in a power cut?

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What should retailers have to provide vulnerable consumers with so they can call 111 in a power cut?

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Following a power cut, what is a reasonable time period that a service should work for?

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www.comcom.govt.nz/111-code

Our timeline

