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In Case of Power Outage

If you experience a power failure, do not scrap the project. Most of the time, the hatch can be saved. The key is to keep the eggs as warm as possible until the power returns.

Placing a large cardboard box over the top of the incubator to create additional insulation can help keep the incubator warm. Many teachers place a box over their incubators at night and on weekends to help insulate the incubators as a protection from possible power outages. In extreme cold, covering the box with blankets may help. To warm the eggs, place candles in jars, light them and place the jars under the box that covers the incubator. Be careful not to put any flammable material closer than a foot from the top of the candles to prevent fires. The heat from the candles can easily keep the eggs above 90°F until the power returns.

Embryos have survived at temperatures as low as 70°F for a short period of time. Some embryos can survive at temperatures below 90°F for up to 18 hours, so do not give up. You should continue to incubate the eggs after the outage; then candle them 4 to 6 days later to see if there has been further development or signs of life. If, after 6 days, you do not see life or development in any of the eggs, then stop the project. Most of the time, a power outage will delay the hatching by a few days and decrease the hatchability to 40-50 percent.

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