



An Extended Guide · No. 1406

Monitoring Apps and Notifications

Watching your battery from
your phone, made simple

Tech Made Simple — Service Made Personal

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! Read this first — this is a licensed electrician's job

A whole-home battery ties into your home's main electrical panel, and that makes the installation real electrical work — a job for a licensed electrician, done with a permit, and often with your utility's approval before it is switched on. It is not a do-it-yourself project. The happy news, and one of a battery's real advantages, is that once it is installed it runs silently and gives off no exhaust and no carbon monoxide, so unlike a generator it is safe indoors or in the garage. But the battery still stores a great deal of energy, so leave the wiring, the mounting, and any service to the pros, and follow the installer's and maker's instructions. I help you plan it and line up a trustworthy licensed electrician — I do not do the wiring myself. The phone app you'll use to keep an eye on the battery is the friendly, do-it-yourself part — but the battery it watches was tied into your panel by that licensed electrician, which is the part that keeps everyone safe.

Let's make the phone app feel easy

A home battery comes with a phone app, and I know a new app can feel like one more thing to learn. It isn't. This guide shows you, in plain English, the handful of things worth knowing — and reassures you that you don't have to use it at all.

I'm Bill, and helping folks feel at ease with apps is a big part of what I do. We'll keep this gentle: what the app shows, the one or two screens actually worth a glance, and the couple of notifications worth turning on. Everything else you can happily ignore.

The most important thing to hear first is this: your battery works completely on its own, app or no app. The app is a convenience — a little window into something that runs fine without you watching. No pressure, no homework.

★ I'll set it up so you don't have to fuss

If an app feels daunting, that's exactly the sort of thing I take care of on a visit — I install it, sign you in, connect the wifi, and turn on the two alerts that matter. Call or text me at (330) 200-8042.

The whole guide, on one page

If you remember only these things, the app will never intimidate you again.

- ❑ You do not have to use the app. The battery runs on its own — the app is just a handy window.
- ❑ The main thing it shows is the state of charge: how full the battery is, like a fuel gauge.
- ❑ It also shows power flowing in and out, and a history of when it kicked in during an outage.
- ❑ There are only two notifications really worth turning on: a low-charge alert and an outage alert.
- ❑ You can set a backup reserve — telling it to always keep some charge held back for emergencies.
- ❑ Setup is small: put it on your phone, connect it to home wifi, flip on those two alerts. I can do it all with you.

✓ The one-sentence version

The app is an optional little window that shows how full your battery is and pings you if it runs low or the power goes out — and that's really all you need from it.

First things first: it's optional

Before a single screen or setting, let's settle the worry that matters most.

Your home battery does its whole job — charging, discharging, switching your home over the instant the grid fails — entirely on its own. It does not wait for you to open an app or push a button. If you never touched the app again after setup, the battery would keep protecting your home exactly the same.

So think of the app as a nice-to-have, not a must-do. Some folks enjoy peeking at it; others set it up once and forget it exists. Both are perfectly fine. There's no wrong way, and nothing bad happens if you ignore it.

✓ Permission to keep it simple

If all you ever want is for the battery to quietly work, you have my blessing to leave the app alone after setup. Simple is a completely valid choice.

A gentle tour of what you'd see

If you do open it, here's the plain-English tour — nothing technical, just what the pictures mean.

The app's main screen shows a few friendly things at a glance: how full the battery is right now, whether power is flowing into it or out of it, and where that power is going. If you have solar, it'll show the sun feeding in too. It's a live picture of your home's energy, drawn simply.

Most apps use easy visuals — a battery that fills up, little arrows showing power moving from the grid or the sun to your home. You don't have to decode anything. A quick look tells you the one thing most folks want to know: am I charged and ready?

✓ You're looking for one feeling, not a report

The goal of a glance isn't to study numbers. It's the simple reassurance of seeing a nice full battery, ready for whatever the weather does. That's the whole point of the window.

The one number worth knowing: state of charge

If you learn a single term from this guide, make it this one — and it's an easy one.

State of charge just means how full the battery is right now. It's the same idea as the fuel gauge in your car or the battery symbol on your phone. Full means it's topped up and ready; lower means it's been doing some work and has less in reserve.

That's genuinely the main thing the app is for. A healthy battery sits nice and full most of the time, quietly ready. If you glance and see it full, all is well. If you ever see it low outside of an outage, that's worth a note — and our troubleshooting guide covers what to do.

✓ Full is the happy resting place

Day to day, your battery likes to sit full and ready, topping itself up from the grid or the sun. Seeing it full is exactly what you want — that's a battery doing its job.

Outage history and gentle alerts

Two more friendly features round out what the app quietly keeps track of for you.

The app remembers when the battery kicked in. After a storm, you can look back and see that at, say, two in the morning the grid dropped and the battery carried the house without a hiccup. It's a quietly satisfying record of the battery earning its keep while you slept.

It also sends alerts — little messages to your phone. Most you'll never need, but a couple are genuinely useful, and we'll set those up on the next few pages. The rest you can safely leave off so your phone stays peaceful.

✓ **Proof it did its job**

Folks are often delighted the first time they check the history after an overnight blip and realize the battery handled the whole thing silently. That little log is a nice bit of peace of mind.

The two notifications worth turning on

Out of everything the app could ping you about, only two really earn a spot on your phone.

- **The low-charge alert.** It tells you the battery is running low — usually during a longer outage — so you know to go easy on the heavy stuff and wait for the grid.
- **The outage alert.** It tells you the power has gone out and you're now running on the battery. Handy when you're away, or asleep, or simply didn't notice the lights never flickered.
- **Everything else is optional.** Marketing messages, minor status notes, and the like can stay off. Two alerts is plenty for most folks.

✓ Two alerts, not twenty

The secret to a friendly app is turning off the noise. Keep the low-charge and outage alerts, mute the rest, and your phone only speaks up when something actually matters.

Backup reserve, in plain words

This is one setting genuinely worth understanding, because it's about being ready for a surprise.

A backup reserve is simply an instruction to the battery: always keep at least this much charge held back for emergencies. It's like deciding never to let your car's gas tank drop below a quarter, so a surprise trip never catches you empty.

Why it matters: if a battery is also helping with your everyday bill, you still want a cushion saved for a sudden outage. The reserve makes sure there's always something in the tank when the grid drops. Your installer can set a sensible reserve, and you can adjust it in the app.

✓ Set it and relax

Once your reserve is set to a level you're comfortable with, you can forget it. The battery quietly honors it in the background, keeping your emergency cushion intact without you thinking about it.

Savings modes, at a light touch

Some apps offer modes that help with your everyday electric bill. Here's the gist, kept simple.

Beyond backup, many batteries can shift when they use power — charging when electricity is cheaper or plentiful and leaning on the battery when it's dearer. The app is where you'd pick a mode like that. Whether it helps, and by how much, depends on your utility's rates and your home.

I'm keeping this brief on purpose, because it's a whole topic of its own — our everyday-savings guide walks through it properly, without any dollar promises I can't keep. For now, just know the app is the dashboard where those choices live.

✓ Backup first, savings second

For most folks the battery's real value is peace of mind in an outage. If it also trims the bill, that's a welcome bonus — but I'd set your reserve for emergencies first and treat savings as the cherry on top.

Two kinds of homes, two sets of needs

A glance at the app means something a little different for a close-in home with short outages than for a rural home where an outage also means the well pump — and the water — has stopped.

If you live in town or the suburbs

In town or the suburbs, the app is mostly about easy reassurance — a pleasant little check that everything's full and fine, with reliable home wifi to keep it connected.

- Short, common outages mean the outage alert is a nice 'don't worry, the battery's got it' ping while you carry on with your evening.
- Steady home wifi keeps the app connected, so a glance always shows the live picture.
- The history log is a quiet delight after a storm — proof the battery carried the house without a flicker.
- If you're using a savings mode, the app is where you keep a casual eye on it.

If you are out in the country on a well

Out in the country, that outage alert carries extra weight: when the power's out the well is out, so the app telling you 'now on battery' is also telling you the water has stopped.

- The outage alert is your cue to go easy on water and lean on what you've stored — when the power's out the well is out, so store drinking water.
- A 240-volt well pump is a heavy draw; if you run it in an outage, the app will show the charge dropping quickly.
- Rural home wifi can be spottier, so the app may lean on a cell signal or hotspot to stay connected — something I can help you sort out.
- The low-charge alert matters more when outages run long, giving you time to conserve well before the reserve runs down.

★ On a well? Let's set the alerts up right

If an outage means your water stops too, the outage and low-charge alerts are worth getting exactly right. Tell me about your setup and I'll help. Call (330) 200-8042.

Getting the app onto your phone

Setup sounds technical but it's just a few small steps, and none of them are hard.

The battery's maker has an app you download from your phone's app store — the same place you'd get any app. You sign in with an account, which your installer very often sets up for you at the same time they set up the battery, so it's ready to go when they leave.

From there it's mostly a matter of connecting the app to your battery over your home wifi, which we'll cover next. If any of this feels like a lot, remember it's a one-time setup — and it's precisely the sort of thing I'm glad to sit down and do with you.

✓ The maker's app is the right one

Only ever install the official app from your battery's maker, from your phone's real app store. If you're unsure which one is genuine, ask your installer or ask me — never a link a stranger sends you.

Connecting it to your home wifi

This is the one slightly fiddly step — and once it's done, it's done for good.

For the app to show you a live picture, the battery needs to be connected to your home wifi. That means telling it your wifi network's name and password once, during setup. Having your wifi password written down and handy makes this go smoothly.

If wifi setup is the kind of thing that makes you sigh, you are in very good company — it trips up plenty of folks. This is genuinely one of the most common things I help with on a visit, and it takes just a few minutes once you know where to look.

★ Wifi hiccups are my bread and butter

Connecting gadgets to home wifi is one of the most common calls I get, and I never make anyone feel silly about it. If the battery won't connect, or the app can't find it, that's a quick fix. Call (330) 200-8042.

The one or two screens actually worth a look

Apps can have lots of menus. You only ever need one or two of them, so let's name them and ignore the rest.

The home or summary screen is the one that matters — the one that opens first, showing how full the battery is and what power is flowing where. Nine times out of ten, that single screen answers everything you wanted to know, and you can close the app again.

The only other screen worth knowing is the history or events list, for peeking at when the battery kicked in during an outage. Beyond those two, the menus are mostly settings your installer already handled. You're free to leave them alone.

✓ Ignore the deep menus with a clear conscience

If you open a screen full of technical settings you don't recognize, the right move is simply to back out. Those are the installer's territory, not yours — you're not missing anything you need.

Turning on the right alerts, muting the noise

Here's the little bit of setup that makes the app genuinely useful without becoming a pest.

- ❑ Open the app's notifications or alerts settings — usually under a settings or bell icon.
- ❑ Turn ON the low-charge alert, so you're warned when the battery is getting low in a long outage.
- ❑ Turn ON the outage alert, so you know the moment your home switches to battery power.
- ❑ Turn OFF marketing messages and minor status pings, so your phone only speaks up when it counts.
- ❑ Send yourself a test if the app offers one, just to see what an alert looks like on your phone.

★ I'll flip exactly these switches for you

This is a five-minute job on a visit — I'll turn on the two that matter, mute the rest, and show you what each alert looks like so none of them ever startle you. Call (330) 200-8042.

If the app says 'offline'

This one worries folks needlessly, so let's defuse it right now.

Sometimes you'll open the app and it says it can't reach the battery, or shows no live data. Nearly always, this means the app has lost its wifi connection to the battery — not that anything is wrong with the battery itself. The battery keeps right on working, protecting your home, whether or not the app can see it.

The usual culprit is home wifi — the internet went down, the router restarted, or the signal is weak where the battery sits. It typically sorts itself out when the wifi comes back. Our troubleshooting guide walks through the simple checks if it lingers.

! An offline app is not a dead battery

Please don't panic if the app goes quiet — it's a window losing its view, not the battery failing. The battery works on its own. If the app stays offline and it bothers you, note it and call your installer or me — never open the unit.

Letting family keep an eye out too

Here's a feature that quietly comforts a lot of families, especially across a distance.

Most apps let you add another person — often a grown child — so they can see the battery and get the same alerts on their own phone. For a son or daughter a few towns or a few states away, that's a real comfort: they'll know if your power's out even when you're busy riding it out.

It's entirely your call whether to do this, and it's easy to set up or undo. Some folks love the shared peace of mind; others prefer to keep it to themselves. Either is fine, and you can change your mind anytime.

✓ A gift to worried kids

If your adult children fret about you during storms, giving them a peek at the app can settle a lot of nerves — theirs and yours. It's one of the kinder little features these apps offer.

A little privacy and scam sense

Any app deserves a moment of plain good sense. Here's the short, reassuring version.

Use a decent password on your battery account, and don't reuse the one from your bank or email. That's most of the privacy story. The app sees your home's energy, not anything a scammer could do much with, so there's no need to feel exposed.

The one thing to stay sharp about is the same as with any gadget: be wary of anyone who calls, emails, or texts claiming to be 'battery support' and wanting remote access or a payment. A genuine maker or installer won't cold-call you demanding control of your app.

! When in doubt, hang up and call someone you trust

If anyone pressures you for remote access, passwords, or payment over the phone about your battery, that's a red flag — hang up. Then call your real installer, or call me at (330) 200-8042, and we'll sort out what's genuine. There's never any rush you need to give in to.

Honest limits: what the app won't do

Knowing what the app isn't keeps your expectations right and your mind at ease.

The app is a window and a few settings — it is not a repair tool. It can't refill the battery during an outage (only the grid or the sun does that), it can't fix wiring, and it can't replace the installer when something actually needs a professional's hands.

That's not a shortcoming; it's just the app staying in its lane. It shows you what's happening and lets you set a few preferences. When something needs doing beyond that, the answer is a phone call, not a tap on the screen.

✓ A dashboard, not a mechanic

Think of the app like the dashboard of a car: it tells you what's going on and lets you set a few things, but it doesn't fix the engine. For that, you call someone — and that's completely normal.

Let me take the mystery out of it

If there's one page to dog-ear, maybe it's this one. This is exactly the kind of help I love to give.

On a visit, I'll do the whole thing with you at your pace: install the app, sign you in, connect it to your home wifi, set a sensible backup reserve, and turn on just the low-charge and outage alerts. Then I'll show you the one screen worth a glance and let you try it yourself until it feels natural.

No rushing, no jargon, and no making you feel silly for asking something twice. By the time I leave, the app will feel like a friendly little tool instead of a puzzle — and you'll know you can call me if it ever gets confusing again.

★ This is what I'm here for

Demystifying apps for folks is one of my favorite parts of the job. If the battery's app has you uneasy, let me make it simple in person. Call or text (330) 200-8042 — and every visit comes with a 30-day, come-back-free guarantee.

Little habits that keep it comfortable

A few gentle tips make the app pleasant to live with rather than one more thing to manage.

- **A weekly glance is plenty.** You don't need to check it daily. Once in a while, or after a storm, is more than enough.
- **Make the text bigger if you'd like.** Your phone's own settings can enlarge text across all apps — easy on the eyes, and I can set it up.
- **Let the alerts do the watching.** With the two notifications on, you don't have to remember to check — it'll tap you on the shoulder.
- **Keep your login somewhere safe.** Jot the account details in the drawer with this guide so a new phone is easy to set up later.

✓ The app should serve you, not the reverse

You're the boss of this little tool. Check it when it suits you, ignore it when it doesn't, and lean on the two alerts to do the remembering. That's the whole art of it.

Common Questions

The questions I hear most about the app, answered plainly.

Q: Do I have to use the app?

No, not at all. The battery does its whole job on its own. The app is an optional window that lets you check on it and get alerts — helpful, but never required.

Q: Does the app cost anything to use?

The maker's app is generally free to download and use. If anyone claims you must pay a fee to keep monitoring your own battery, check with your installer before paying anything — that's a question worth pausing on.

Q: What does 'state of charge' mean?

Simply how full the battery is right now, like a fuel gauge or your phone's battery symbol. Full means topped up and ready; lower means it's been doing some work.

Q: The app says offline — is my battery broken?

Almost certainly not. That usually just means the app lost its wifi connection to the battery. The battery keeps working regardless. It typically reconnects when your wifi is back.

Q: Can my son or daughter see it too?

Usually, yes. Most apps let you add a family member so they get the same view and alerts on their phone — a nice comfort for family who live away. It's easy to set up or undo.

Q: What happens to the app if I get a new phone?

You just install the app on the new phone and sign in with the same account — which is why it helps to keep your login written down. The battery and its settings stay exactly as they were.

★ Still puzzled by the app? That's an easy fix

Apps are meant to help, not stress you out. If yours is doing the opposite, let me sit down and make it simple. Call or text (330) 200-8042, no pressure.

You don't have to do this alone

You just have to remember that a friendly, patient person is one call away.

I hope this guide made watching your home battery from your phone feel a little less daunting and a lot more doable. Keep it in a drawer with your other home papers, come back to a page whenever you need it, and don't worry about memorizing anything.

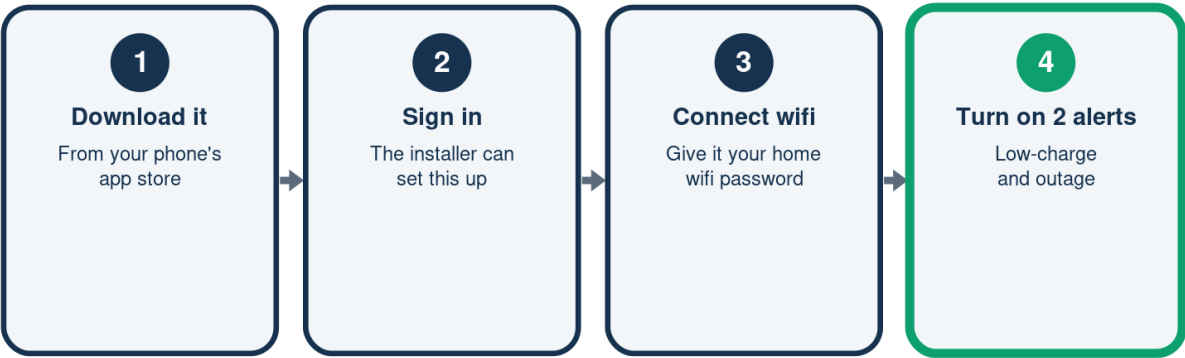
When you'd rather have a hand, that's exactly what I do. I come to your home, work at your pace, and never make you feel rushed or silly for asking. A first visit is a flat \$99, and for the parts that don't need me on-site I can often help right on your screen for \$49. Every visit comes with a 30-day, come-back-free guarantee. I don't do the licensed electrical work myself — for that I'll help you line up a trustworthy local pro.

★ Bill's Home Tech — real help, close to home

Call or text me at (330) 200-8042, or visit BillsHomeTech.com. Serving Atwater and all of Portage County. 30+ years of patient, plain-English tech help — and if you're ever not 100% happy with a visit, I'll make it right or refund it. That's a promise. — Bill

Getting the App Going

Four gentle steps — Bill can do them with you



A one-time setup — then it just works.

The Two Alerts Worth Turning On

Leave the rest off

	Low-charge alert	Outage alert
It says	Getting low	Now on battery
Why it helps	Time to conserve	Power is out
When	A long outage	The moment it hits

These two matter — marketing pings and the rest can stay off.

Do You Have To Use the App?

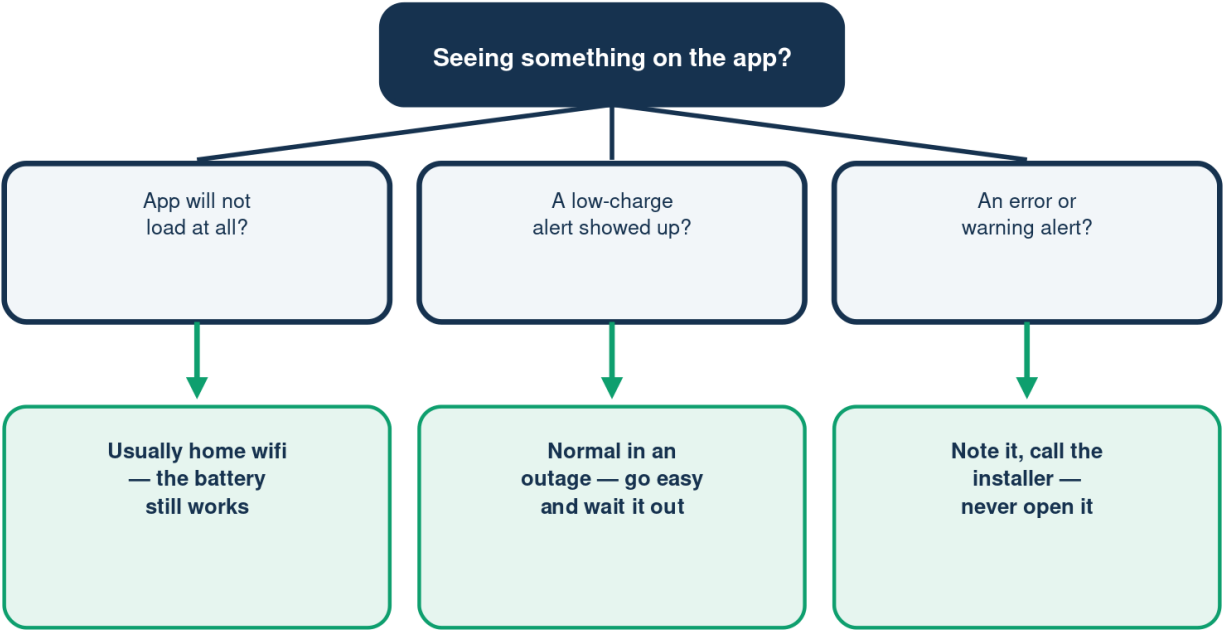
Short answer: no

	Without the app	With the app
Battery works	Yes, on its own	Yes
You can see	Nothing extra	How full it is
You get alerts	No	Low-charge, outage
Good for	Set and forget	Peace of mind

The app is a handy window — never a requirement.

The App Says Something — Now What?

A calm way to read what you see



When unsure, call — Bill can read the app with you and decide who to ring.

Illustration - a schematic, not to scale. Your setup may differ.



Need a Real Person?

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— Bill

Prefer help without a visit?

Bill can screen-share and fix many things remotely — a flat \$49, free for Support Plan members.



A Note From Bill

A quick note from Bill.

I write these guides to make home tech a little less frustrating, and I do my best to keep every step accurate and up to date. Still, every home, device, and setup is a bit different, so I can't promise a guide will match yours exactly or fix your particular problem. These guides are for general information only — they're not professional, legal, or financial advice, and they don't replace your device's own manual or the manufacturer's instructions. Please go slow, use your own good judgment, and use everything here at your own risk. If a step involves electrical wiring, a gas appliance, a water heater, plumbing, or climbing a ladder — or if anything just doesn't feel safe — please stop and call a licensed professional (or give me a call at 330-200-8042). Bill's Home Tech and Bill Davis can't be responsible for any damage, data loss, or injury that comes from using these guides. Thanks for reading, and stay safe out there.

— *Bill*



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