



An Extended Guide · No. 1733

A Caregiver's Backup-Power Checklist

For the person who helps
someone stay powered

Tech Made Simple — Service Made Personal

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! Read this first — this is not medical advice

This guide is about keeping the power on — it is not medical advice, and it is not a substitute for a plan made with the people who know your health. Make your backup-power plan together with your doctor and your equipment supplier, and follow their guidance on your specific device, its settings, and how much backup you need. Register ahead of time on your electric utility's medical or priority-restoration list. And please never rely on a backup battery alone for life-sustaining equipment: a battery buys you time, it does not replace care. If the power is out and anyone's health is at risk — trouble breathing, chest pain, confusion, or bluish lips — call 911, or get to a hospital or shelter that has power. This guide is for the caregiver — it helps you keep the power on, not make medical decisions. Those stay with the doctor and equipment supplier, and if health is ever at risk, you call 911.

For the person who helps — thank you

If you look after someone who depends on powered medical equipment, this guide is for you. It's the short course on the power side of caring for them in an outage — what to know, where to look, and what to do.

I'm Bill, and I run Bill's Home Tech here in Portage County, Ohio. The caregiver is often the quiet hero of a good backup plan. You may be a spouse in the next room or an adult child two states away, but either way, when the power goes out, a lot rests on you knowing the plan. This guide makes sure you do — calmly and without jargon.

You don't need to be technical. You need to know where things are, how to switch to backup, the warning signs to watch for, and when to call for help. That's it — and we'll walk through all of it together.

★ I can teach you the whole plan

On a visit I can walk a caregiver through everything hands-on, so you feel confident, not overwhelmed. Call or text me at (330) 200-8042.

The whole guide, on one page

If you remember only these things, you can keep the power on and your loved one safe.

- ❑ Know where the equipment, backups, chargers, and written plan live.
- ❑ Know how to switch each essential device to backup power.
- ❑ Know the warning signs, and when they mean call 911.
- ❑ Keep a copy of the plan and the important numbers where you can reach them.
- ❑ Never run a generator indoors — outdoors only, well away from the house.
- ❑ Keep the batteries charged as a steady habit, not a scramble.
- ❑ If you help from afar, know who's nearby who can be there fast.
- ❑ When in doubt about health, call 911 — that's never the wrong call.

✓ One idea to hold onto

You don't have to know everything about the machines. You have to know the plan — where things are, how to switch over, and when to call for help.

Why you need your own copy of the plan

A plan that lives only in your loved one's head can't help you at 2 a.m.

The single most useful thing a caregiver can have is their own copy of the written power plan — the same one our planning guide describes. It tells you what every device is, how each is backed up, what the settings are, and who to call. With it in hand, you're never guessing, and you can act even if the person you care for is asleep, rattled, or unable to talk you through it.

- Get a copy of the written plan and keep it somewhere you'll always find it.
- If you're long-distance, keep a copy on your phone as well as on paper.
- Make sure it lists devices, backups, settings, and every important number.
- Review it together, so you both know it says the same thing.

★ Let's make sure your copy is clear

I can help turn the plan into something a caregiver can follow at a glance — clear enough to act on in the dark. That's exactly what a visit is for.

Learn where everything lives

In an outage, you can't help find what you've never seen.

Take a calm walk through the home with the person you care for and learn where each piece of the plan lives. Where's the battery power station? The chargers and spare batteries? Any oxygen backup tanks? The flashlight, the go-bag, the written plan? Knowing these spots by heart means that when the lights go out, you go straight to what you need instead of hunting in the dark.

- ☐ The battery power station and its charging cords.
- ☐ Device chargers and any spare batteries.
- ☐ Oxygen backup tanks, if there are any.
- ☐ Flashlights, the go-bag, and the written plan.
- ☐ Where the CO alarms are, and how they sound.

✓ Do the walk-through in daylight

Learn where everything is on a calm, bright day. It's far easier to remember a location you've seen clearly than one you're finding for the first time by flashlight.

Learn how to switch each device to backup

This is the hands-on skill that matters most — so practice it until it's easy.

For each essential device, learn the simple steps to move it from the wall to backup power: which cord, which outlet on the power station, any setting to change. Practice it a few times with the person you care for, so your hands know the way. The goal is that you could do it calmly even in a stressful moment, without needing to read a manual.

- Learn which cord and outlet each device uses on the battery station.
- Learn any setting that changes on backup — following the supplier's guidance only.
- Practice the switch a few times until it feels natural.
- Keep the steps written in big print, near the equipment, just in case.

★ I'll teach you hands-on

The best way to learn the switch-over is to do it with someone patient beside you. I'm glad to be that person — we'll practice until you feel sure of it.

Know the warning signs — and when to call 911

Knowing what to watch for lets you act quickly and confidently.

Ask the doctor and supplier which warning signs matter most for your loved one's situation, and write them down. In general, trouble breathing, chest pain, confusion, or bluish lips or skin mean call 911 right away — don't wait to see if it passes. You don't need to diagnose anything. You need to notice that something's wrong and make the call. That's exactly what 911 is for, and no one will ever fault you for it.

- Ask the doctor and supplier for the specific signs to watch for.
- Trouble breathing, chest pain, confusion, or bluish lips — call 911.
- Don't wait to be certain; noticing something's wrong is enough.
- Keep the warning signs written down where you'll see them.

! When in doubt, make the call

You will never be wrong to call 911 when someone's health seems to be slipping. Backup power buys time; it never replaces care.

The one safety rule every caregiver must know

If a generator is part of the plan, this is the rule you carry for both of you.

As a caregiver, you may be the one setting up or checking a generator in an outage — so this rule is yours to know cold. It's the most important safety point in the whole batch.

! A generator's exhaust is deadly — a battery is not

If your backup plan includes a gas- or propane-powered generator, remember that its exhaust contains carbon monoxide — an invisible, odorless gas that can kill in minutes. Never run any fuel-burning generator indoors, in a garage, in a shed, in a basement, or on a porch, not even with a door open and a fan going. Run it outside only, well away from the house — the safety agencies say at least 20 feet — with the exhaust pointed away from every window, door, and vent. This is one big reason a battery power station suits medical equipment so well: it makes no exhaust at all, so it is safe to use right beside the bed, indoors. Put battery-backup carbon-monoxide alarms on every floor and outside the bedrooms, and if an alarm sounds or anyone feels dizzy, sick, or sleepy, get everyone into fresh air first and ask questions later. As the caregiver, never let a generator run indoors, in a garage, or in any sheltered spot, no matter how tempting during bad weather. It's the one place I ask you to be firm even if your loved one insists — outdoors only, at least 20 feet from the house, exhaust pointed away.

Keep the plan and numbers within reach

The right number, found fast, is worth a great deal in a tense moment.

Make sure you have, on paper and on your phone, every number you might need: the doctor, the equipment supplier and their after-hours line, the pharmacy, the utility, and other family or neighbors who could help. Keep the written plan with them. When something's happening, you want to reach the right person without a search.

- ❑ 911 — the one to know by heart.
- ❑ The doctor's office and after-hours line.
- ❑ The equipment supplier, including their emergency number.
- ❑ The pharmacy and the electric utility.
- ❑ Other family and a nearby neighbor who can help.

✓ Big print, two places

Keep the numbers in large, clear print on the fridge and saved in your phone. In a stressful moment, easy-to-read beats scrolling every time.

Two kinds of homes, two sets of needs

How you help depends a lot on how close you live — so let's look at both the near and the far caregiver.

If you live in town or the suburbs

If you live nearby — same house, same town — you can be there in person quickly, so your plan is about hands-on readiness.

- You can practice the switch-over in person until it's second nature.
- You can check batteries and swap tanks yourself on a regular round.
- You can be there fast if something goes wrong in an outage.
- Still keep your own copy of the plan, in case someone else has to step in.

If you are out in the country on a well

If you're a long-distance caregiver, you can't be there in minutes — so your plan leans on knowing who is nearby and keeping the information at your fingertips.

- Line up a trusted neighbor or nearby friend who can be there quickly.
- Keep the plan and numbers on your phone, so you can guide by call.
- Set up regular check-ins, especially when storms are forecast.
- Know the local emergency number and the nearest hospital, not just 911.

★ Let's set up help that fits your distance

Whether you're down the hall or across the country, I'll help you set up a plan that works for how you care. Call (330) 200-8042.

Helping from a distance

You can do a great deal for someone's safety even from far away.

Long-distance caregiving has its own quiet toolkit. You can keep the plan and numbers on your phone, guide a switch-over by call, and stay in touch during storms. The most powerful thing, though, is having a person on the ground — a neighbor, a friend, a nearby relative — who can be there in minutes when you can't. Set that up in advance, and distance matters much less.

- Keep the plan, device list, and numbers saved on your phone.
- Arrange a nearby person who can respond fast, and introduce yourselves.
- Set up regular check-in calls, more often when weather threatens.
- Know the local hospital and non-emergency lines, not only 911.

★ I can be your eyes on the ground

For a long-distance caregiver, I can visit, check the setup, and report back, so you know things are right even from afar. Many families find that a real comfort.

The caregiver's charging habit

Keeping the batteries ready is often the caregiver's quiet, vital job.

Batteries drift down over weeks, and the person you care for may not think to check. A gentle, regular habit — yours or shared — keeps everything ready. Fold it into a visit or a call you already make, so it never gets forgotten. A charged battery is only reassuring if someone actually looked at it lately.

- Keep the battery power station topped up as the manual recommends.
- Charge device batteries and spares on a regular rotation.
- Check charge levels during a visit or a routine call.
- Before a forecast storm, make sure everything is charged to full.

✓ Tie it to something you already do

If you visit on Sundays or call on Fridays, make that your charge-check. Attached to a habit, it never slips.

When to stop and call 911

As a caregiver, this is the most important judgment you'll make — and it's simpler than it feels.

If equipment fails and backups are running low, or if the person you care for is having trouble breathing, has chest pain, seems confused, or has bluish lips or skin — call 911. Don't wait, don't try to be certain first, and don't worry about overreacting. Calling for help when someone's health is slipping is exactly the right instinct, every single time.

! Backup power buys time — it does not replace care

Everything you do with the power is meant to keep an ordinary outage calm. It's never a reason to wait when health is at risk. When in doubt, call 911 or get to a hospital or shelter with power.

Practice the plan together

A plan you've practiced as a team is one you can both trust.

On a calm day, run through the plan together: switch a device to backup, find everything on the list, and talk through what you'd each do in an outage. Practicing as a pair means you're not relying on one person's memory, and it surfaces any confusion while there's time to clear it up. Our testing guide has a full walk-through you can follow together.

★ Let's practice as a team

I'm glad to run through the whole plan with both of you, so caregiver and loved one are on the same page. Call or text (330) 200-8042 to set up a visit.

What I help with — and what I don't

Being clear about this line is part of doing right by both of you.

Bill helps with	Always the doctor or supplier's call
Teaching you the switch-over	The prescribed settings
Showing you where everything lives	How much backup is needed
Setting up charging habits	Any change to care or dosing
A team practice run	When to seek emergency care

★ **A boundary I keep**

I train you on the power and the equipment. The medical judgments stay with the doctor and supplier — and I'll always point you to them for anything about care.

A few gentle reminders

Not judgments — just the patterns I see caregivers run into, so you can step around them.

- Never getting your own copy of the plan, so it's locked in one person's head.
- Not knowing how to switch a device to backup until the moment you need to.
- Not knowing where the backups and spare batteries are kept.
- For long-distance caregivers, having no one nearby who can respond fast.
- Hesitating to call 911 for fear of overreacting.

! If one of these sounds familiar, that's all right

Spotting a gap is the whole point. Fix one this week — get your copy of the plan, or practice the switch-over — and you're a stronger help already.

A caregiver's checklist

Work through it at your own pace — each item makes you a surer help.

- ☐ I have my own copy of the written plan and the numbers.
- ☐ I know where the equipment, backups, chargers, and go-bag live.
- ☐ I can switch each essential device to backup power.
- ☐ I know the warning signs and when they mean call 911.
- ☐ I know the generator rule: outdoors only, never inside.
- ☐ I help keep the batteries charged on a regular habit.
- ☐ If I'm far away, I have someone nearby who can respond fast.
- ☐ We've practiced the plan together at least once.

★ Even a few boxes checked makes a difference

You don't have to finish today. Every box you check makes you a calmer, more capable help when it counts.

Questions worth asking together

Bring these to the doctor and supplier with the person you care for.

Q: What should we ask the doctor?

Which warning signs matter most, which mean call 911 versus the office, and whether any settings change on backup power.

Q: What should we ask the equipment supplier?

How to switch each device to backup, how many hours of backup to plan for, and their after-hours emergency number.

Q: What should I ask as the caregiver specifically?

How I'd recognize a problem, what to do first, and how to help even from a distance if I don't live nearby.

Q: What can Bill teach me?

The switch-over, where everything lives, the charging habit, the generator safety rule, and a full practice run for both of us.

✓ I'll help you prepare the questions

Not sure what to ask? Call me first and we'll write down the questions for the doctor and supplier, so nothing important gets missed.

Common Questions

The questions caregivers ask me most, answered warmly and plainly.

Q: I'm not technical — can I still do this?

Absolutely. You don't need to understand the machines, only the plan: where things are, how to switch to backup, and when to call for help. I'll teach you the rest hands-on.

Q: How can I help if I live far away?

Keep the plan and numbers on your phone, arrange a trusted person nearby who can respond fast, and set up regular check-ins — more often when storms threaten.

Q: What if I call 911 and it turns out to be nothing?

That's perfectly all right, and it happens. Calling when health seems to be slipping is always the right instinct — no one will fault you for it.

Q: Should I really be the one enforcing the generator rule?

Yes — kindly but firmly. Running a generator indoors is deadly, so it's the one place to hold the line even if your loved one is tempted. Outdoors only, always.

★ However you help, I'm glad to support you

Whether you're nearby or far, new to this or seasoned, call or text me at (330) 200-8042. Caring for someone is a lot — let me take the power side off your plate.

Bringing it all together

A caregiver's job on the power side is simple: know the plan, know where things are, know how to switch over, and know when to call.

With your own copy of the plan, a mental map of where everything lives, practiced hands for the switch-over, and the warning signs written down, you're ready to keep the power on for someone you love. Keep the batteries charged, hold firm on the generator rule, and never hesitate to call 911. If you're far away, a person on the ground bridges the distance.

This works alongside the planning guide, the phone-and-alert guide, and the what-to-do-when-the-battery-runs-low guide. Take them one at a time.

★ Let me help you feel ready

There's no need to shoulder this alone. Call or text me at (330) 200-8042, and I'll walk you through everything, calmly and at your pace.

Your next small step

Small, doable steps in a gentle order — no need to do them all at once.

- This week: get your own copy of the written plan and the numbers.
- This week: do a daylight walk-through of where everything lives.
- This month: practice switching each device to backup power.
- This month: if you're far away, line up someone nearby who can help fast.
- Before storm season: do a practice run together.

✓ One step at a time is plenty

Even getting your own copy of the plan today makes you a stronger help. The rest follows at your pace.

A gentle word: care for yourself too

You help best when you're not carrying it all alone.

Looking after someone who depends on equipment is a real responsibility, and it's easy to shoulder more than any one person should. Share the plan with other family so it doesn't rest on you alone. Lean on the professionals — the doctor, the supplier, and yes, me for the power side — so you're not the only one holding it all. Taking care of yourself isn't a luxury; it's how you keep being able to help.

★ Let me carry the power side for you

The equipment, the batteries, the testing, the safe setup — that's mine to help with, so it's not one more thing on your shoulders. Call (330) 200-8042 whenever you'd like a hand.

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 caring for someone who depends on powered equipment feel a little less daunting and a lot more doable. Keep it in a drawer with your other important home papers, come back to a page whenever you need it, and don't worry about memorizing anything.

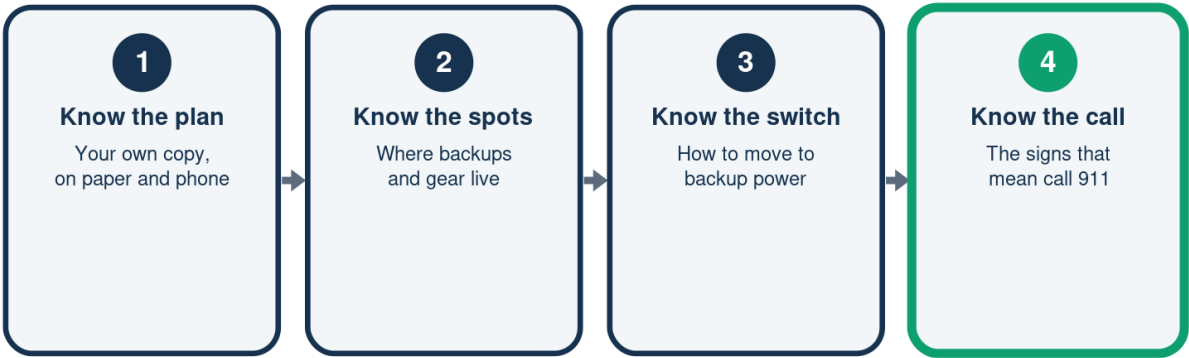
When you'd rather have a hand, that's exactly what I do. I come to your home, work at your pace, and never make you feel rushed or silly for asking. I'll help you choose and set up a battery power station, get the equipment your family depends on connected safely, and test the whole plan before you ever need it. 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 help with the power side only — your settings, your prescription, and when to seek care always stay with your doctor and your equipment supplier — and for any licensed electrical work, I'll line you up with 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

The Caregiver's Four Essentials

You don't need to be technical -- just ready



Four things to know -- the rest I'll teach you hands-on.

Near vs. Far Caregiver

How you help depends on how close you are

	If you're near	If you're far
Your strength	Be there fast	Guide by phone
Practice	In person	Talk it through
Key setup	Hands-on skill	A person on the ground
Both need	Your own plan copy	Numbers on your phone

Either way, keep your own copy of the plan and the numbers.

What Every Caregiver Should Know

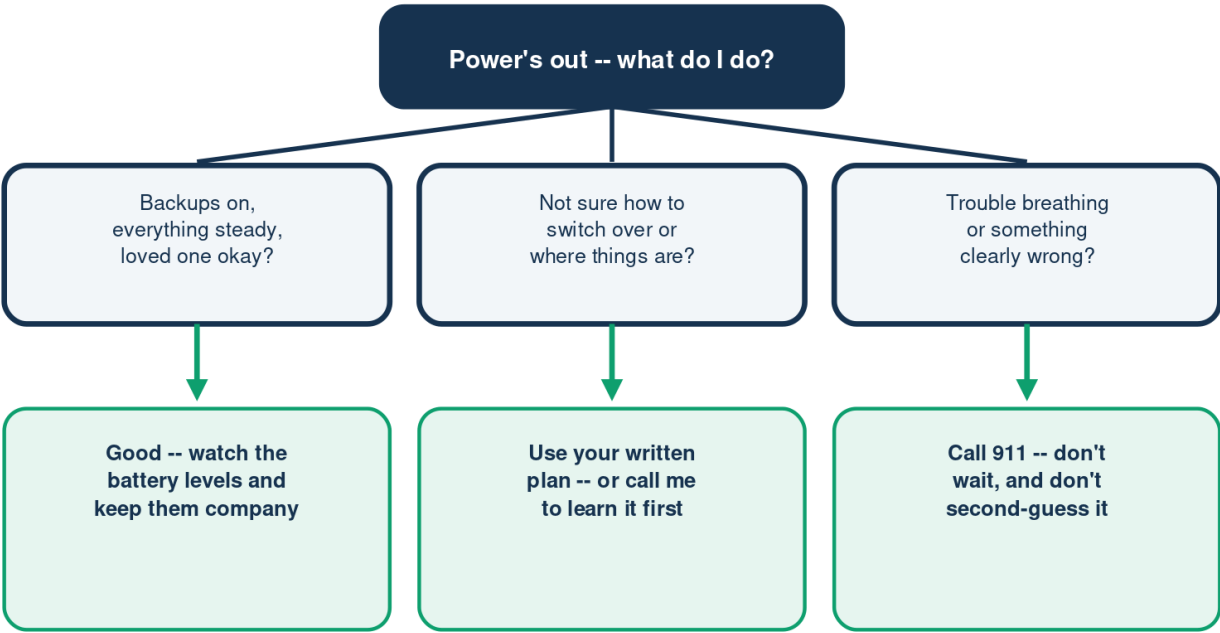
The power side, in four areas

	Know how to	Where to look
Switch to backup	Each device's cord	By the equipment
Charge batteries	The station, spares	On a habit
Spot trouble	The warning signs	Written down
Reach help	Call the right pro	Numbers on the fridge

Medical judgments always stay with the doctor and supplier.

As the Caregiver, What Now?

A calm gut-check in an outage



This guide isn't medical advice -- always follow the doctor and equipment supplier.
Illustration - a schematic, not to scale. Your setup may differ.



Need a Real Person?

You do not have to remember all of it.
You just have to remember you can call.
Friendly, in-home tech help -- I come to you.

BILL'S PROMISE

If you are not 100% happy with a visit, I will
make it right -- or refund it. No awkwardness,
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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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