



An Extended Guide · No. 1727

A Go-Bag and Evacuation Plan

Ready to leave calmly
if you ever have to

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. Sometimes the safest choice is to leave for somewhere with power — so a ready go-bag and a decided-in-advance destination are part of a good plan, not a failure of one.

Ready to stay, ready to go

A good outage plan has two halves. One keeps you comfortable at home. The other gets you calmly to somewhere with power if you ever need it. This guide is about that second half — the go-bag and the plan to leave.

I'm Bill, and I run Bill's Home Tech here in Portage County, Ohio. I want to say something gently: deciding to leave isn't giving up. For a household that depends on powered equipment, knowing where you'd go and having a bag by the door is one of the most reassuring things you can do. It turns a scary decision into one you already made on a calm day.

We'll pack the bag together, decide the destination in advance, and make sure your equipment can travel safely. None of it is complicated, and you don't have to do it all at once.

★ Deciding in advance is what brings the calm

Most families tell me the peace comes from simply having decided — even if they never use the plan. Call or text me at (330) 200-8042 and we'll put it together.

The whole guide, on one page

If you remember only these things, you're ready to leave calmly if you ever have to.

- ❑ Decide now where you'd go if power ran low — a relative, a hospital, or a shelter.
- ❑ Keep a go-bag packed with chargers, spare batteries, and a few days of device supplies.
- ❑ Pack medications and a way to keep the cold ones cold on the trip.
- ❑ Keep a copy of your written power plan and medication list in the bag.
- ❑ Know how you'd get there — your own car, a family member, or a ride you've arranged.
- ❑ Transport oxygen safely: secure the cylinders, keep them upright, and no smoking near them.
- ❑ Tell whoever you'd go to, so your arrival is never a surprise.
- ❑ If anyone's health is at risk, call 911 — don't wait to pack.

✓ One idea to hold onto

A bag by the door and a destination in mind mean that leaving, if it comes to that, is a short calm errand instead of a frantic scramble.

Why a go-bag matters more for a medical household

For most homes a flashlight and a snack will do. When someone depends on equipment, leaving takes a little more thought — so we do it ahead of time.

If you have to leave in a hurry, the last thing you want is to be hunting for a charger, counting pills, or wondering where the spare battery went. A go-bag solves that by keeping the essentials in one place, packed on a calm day when you could think clearly. When the moment comes, you grab one bag and go.

It also means a helper — a neighbor, a grandchild, a paramedic — can grab everything you need without knowing your house. That alone is worth the afternoon it takes to pack it.

! Never delay leaving for a bag

The bag is there to make leaving easier, never to hold you up. If someone's health is slipping, call 911 and go — belongings can be replaced.

What goes in the bag: the equipment side

Start with everything your devices need to keep running away from home.

Walk through your day and picture running each device somewhere else. What does it plug into? What does it need refilled or replaced? Pack a few days' worth. Your equipment supplier can tell you what travel supplies they recommend for your specific devices — ask them.

- Chargers and cords for every device, plus your phone.
- A charged power bank and, if you have one, a small battery power station.
- Spare batteries for any device that uses them, charged and ready.
- A few days of consumable supplies — masks, tubing, filters, whatever your devices use.
- A car adapter for anything that can run from a 12-volt outlet.

✓ Pack copies, not your only set

Where you can, keep the go-bag's chargers and cords as spares, so you're never stripping your bedside setup to pack — and never leaving the bag half-empty.

Medications, and keeping the cold ones cold

Your medications travel with you — and some of them need to stay cool on the way.

Pack a few days of every medication, in their own labeled containers, along with a written list of what you take and when. If any of your medications must stay refrigerated, plan how they'll stay cool for the trip — a small insulated bag with a cold pack is often enough for a short drive. Our guide on keeping refrigerated medications cold goes into this in detail; ask your pharmacist how your specific medications should be handled.

- A few days' supply of each medication, in labeled containers.
- A written, up-to-date list of medications, doses, and times.
- A small insulated bag and cold pack for anything that must stay cool.
- Your pharmacy's name and number, in case you need a refill on the road.

★ The pharmacist knows the medication side

How a medication should be stored or handled is always your pharmacist's or doctor's call. I help with the power and the gadgets that keep things cold — never the medicine itself.

Power to get you there and settled

The bag should carry enough power to bridge the gap until you reach an outlet.

Between leaving home and plugging in somewhere new, your devices still need power. A charged power bank covers phones. A small battery power station — safe to run indoors, with no fumes — can carry larger equipment for a stretch, and the car can help along the way. Our car and DC power guide covers running equipment from the vehicle safely.

✓ Why a battery is the indoor-safe choice

A battery power station makes no fumes and no carbon monoxide, so unlike a fuel generator it is safe to run indoors — right on the nightstand next to a CPAP, or beside a chair next to a concentrator. It is also quiet enough to sleep next to and gives clean, steady power that sensitive equipment is happy with. A battery power station is a fine travel companion because you can use it right inside the car or a relative's spare room — it makes no exhaust, so there's nothing to vent.

Loading the car safely

A few careful habits keep the trip itself safe — especially with oxygen aboard.

If you use oxygen, it travels with special care: keep cylinders upright and secured so they can't roll, crack a window for a little airflow, and absolutely no smoking or open flame anywhere near them. Our oxygen-cylinder guide covers safe handling. And there's one more rule that catches people every year, especially while loading a car in cold weather.

! 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. Never let the car idle in a closed or attached garage while you load up or warm it — the exhaust is deadly carbon monoxide, just like a generator's. Back the car out into the open first, then load.

Decide where you'd go, in advance

Choosing the destination on a calm day is half the battle won.

Think through, before you ever need it, where you'd head if power and every backup ran low: a relative's or friend's home with power, a hospital, or a designated emergency shelter. Knowing the place and roughly how you'd get there turns a frightening decision into one you've already made. Many areas open shelters during long outages — your county's emergency office or your utility can tell you how you'd learn where.

- A first choice — often a relative or friend with reliable power.
- A backup choice, in case the first isn't reachable.
- How you'd find out where an official shelter is, if it came to that.
- Whether your first choice can handle your equipment — ask them now, not later.

✓ Ask before you need to

Call the relative or friend now and ask if you could come in a long outage. Knowing the answer in advance is a weight off everyone's mind.

Copies of your plan and papers

The bag should be able to speak for you if you're too rattled to.

- ☐ A copy of your written power plan and device list.
- ☐ Your medication list, with doses and times.
- ☐ Phone numbers for your doctor, supplier, pharmacy, utility, and family.
- ☐ A note of your medical conditions and allergies, plainly written.
- ☐ Insurance cards or copies, and a photo ID.
- ☐ Your equipment suppliers' after-hours numbers.

★ I'll help you assemble the packet

On a visit I can help you gather and copy all of this into one clear folder for the bag — so a helper could find everything without asking you a single question.

Two kinds of homes, two sets of needs

Where you live changes how far you'd travel to safety and how much you need to carry to get there.

If you live in town or the suburbs

In town or a close-in suburb, a relative, a hospital, or a shelter is often a short drive, so the trip itself is usually quick.

- A shorter trip means the go-bag mainly has to bridge a brief drive.
- More places to go — family, shelters, even a well-lit business with power — are within easy reach.
- Roads are more likely to be clear and passable soon after a storm.
- A rideshare, a neighbor, or a quick family pickup is usually easy to arrange.

If you are out in the country on a well

Out in the country, the drive to a relative, hospital, or shelter is longer, roads may be blocked by weather, and a private well means the water's off too — so plan to be more self-sufficient for the journey.

- Pack for a longer trip — more device supplies, more power, more medication.
- Have a backup route in mind in case a road is flooded or blocked by a downed tree.
- Keep the car's tank at least half full in storm season, since a station may be down.
- Arrange your ride in advance — a rural pickup is a bigger favor to ask at short notice.

★ Let's plan your route and your bag

Tell me where you'd go and how far it is, and I'll help you pack a go-bag sized for that trip and set up the power to make it. Call (330) 200-8042.

Tell someone, and arrange your ride

A plan to leave works best when the people in it already know their part.

The kindest thing you can do for future-you is to line up the people now. Tell whoever you'd go to that you might come. Decide who'd drive if you couldn't. If you'd need special transport for equipment or a wheelchair, find out in advance how you'd arrange it, because that's hard to sort out in the middle of a storm.

- Tell your first-choice destination they might see you in a long outage.
- Decide who would drive you, and make sure they're willing and reachable.
- If you can't drive and have no one nearby, ask now how you'd get a ride.
- Give a trusted person a copy of your plan, so they can help even from afar.

✓ People want to help — let them know how

Family often tell me they'd have dropped everything to help, if only they'd known the plan. Sharing it in advance is a gift to everyone.

Knowing when to leave — and when to call 911

This page exists so you never have to wonder, in the moment, whether it's time.

Lean toward leaving early, while it's still an easy trip, rather than waiting until backups are nearly gone. If your power station and spare batteries are running low with no power in sight, it's time to head for somewhere with electricity. And if equipment fails or someone is having trouble breathing, has chest pain, seems confused, or has bluish lips — call 911 right away. Don't wait, and don't stop to pack.

! A go-bag buys ease — it does not replace care

Leaving early and calmly is the goal. But nothing in the bag is worth waiting on when health is slipping. When in doubt, call 911 or get to a hospital or shelter with power.

Keep the bag ready year-round

A go-bag with dead batteries or expired medicine isn't ready — so we keep it fresh.

A bag packed once and forgotten slowly stops being useful. Batteries drain, medications expire, and supplies get borrowed. A quick seasonal check keeps it trustworthy. Tie it to something you already do, like turning the clocks, so it never gets skipped.

- Every few months, charge the power bank, station, and spare batteries.
- Rotate medications so what's in the bag is current, following your pharmacist's guidance.
- Replace any device supplies you've borrowed from the bag.
- Re-check that your papers and numbers are still up to date.

✓ A twice-a-year habit is plenty

When the clocks change, spend ten minutes with the bag. That's usually all it takes to keep it ready the rest of the year.

Practice a calm grab-and-go

A quick dry run shows you what's missing before it matters.

On an easy afternoon, pretend you have to leave. Grab the bag, load the car the way you would for real, and see how it feels. Could you carry everything? Did the equipment fit? Was anything missing? A practice run surfaces the little gaps — a cord left behind, a bag too heavy — while there's no pressure at all. Our testing guide covers practicing the whole plan.

★ Let's do a practice run together

I'm glad to help you walk through a calm grab-and-go, sort out what fits where, and fix anything awkward before it counts. Call or text (330) 200-8042.

What I help with — and what I don't

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

Bill helps with	Always someone else's call
Packing the power and charging gear	Your medications and doses
Setting up a travel battery station	How to store your medicine
Assembling your papers into a folder	When to seek emergency care
A practice grab-and-go run	Your medical transport needs

★ **A boundary I keep**

I handle the power, the gadgets, and the organizing. Your medications and your care always stay with your pharmacist, supplier, and doctor — and I'll say so every time.

A few gentle reminders

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

- Having no destination in mind, so leaving becomes a panicked decision.
- Packing a bag once and never checking it, until the batteries are dead.
- Forgetting how the cold medications will stay cool on the trip.
- Idling the car in the garage to warm it before loading — a deadly carbon-monoxide risk.
- Waiting too long to leave, until the easy trip has become a hard one.

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

Noticing a gap is exactly the point of this page. Pick one thing to fix this week, and your plan is stronger from here.

A go-bag checklist

Work through it at your own pace — add to the bag as you gather each item.

- ☐ Chargers, cords, and a charged power bank for every device and my phone.
- ☐ Spare batteries and a few days of device supplies.
- ☐ A few days of medications, labeled, with a written list.
- ☐ A way to keep cold medications cool on the trip.
- ☐ A copy of my written power plan and my numbers.
- ☐ Insurance cards, photo ID, and a note of my conditions and allergies.
- ☐ A decided destination, a backup, and a way to get there.
- ☐ The people I'd rely on know the plan.

★ Even a half-packed bag beats none

You don't have to finish it today. Every item you add is one less thing to think about if you ever have to go.

Questions worth asking the pros in your life

Some questions belong with your supplier or pharmacist, not with me — here's how to ask them well.

Q: What should I ask my equipment supplier?

What travel supplies they recommend, how to transport your devices and any oxygen safely, and how you'd reach them if you had to relocate.

Q: What should I ask my pharmacist?

How to carry your medications, which must stay cold and for how long they can be out of the fridge, and how to get a refill away from home.

Q: What should I ask my county or utility?

How you'd learn where emergency shelters open in a long outage, and whether any offer power for medical equipment.

Q: What can Bill help me with?

Packing the power and charging gear, setting up a travel battery station, organizing your papers, and a practice grab-and-go.

✓ I'll help you prepare the questions

Not sure how to ask? Call me first and we'll write down what to ask your supplier and pharmacist, so nothing gets forgotten.

Common Questions

The questions families ask me most about leaving safely, answered warmly and plainly.

Q: Isn't planning to leave a bit dramatic?

Not at all — it's just good sense. For a household on powered equipment, having a destination and a bag ready is calm, ordinary preparation, not panic.

Q: How much should I pack?

Enough device supplies, power, and medication to comfortably cover the trip and a stay — your supplier and pharmacist can tell you how much for your situation. I won't guess amounts.

Q: Can I take oxygen in the car?

Usually yes, with care — keep cylinders upright and secured, crack a window, and no smoking near them. Ask your oxygen supplier for their exact travel guidance.

Q: When should I actually leave?

Lean toward early, while it's an easy trip — don't wait until backups are nearly gone. And for any health emergency, call 911 first and go.

★ However far along you are, I'm glad to help

Whether you're just starting a bag or refining a plan, call or text me at (330) 200-8042. We'll get you ready to stay — and ready to go — one calm step at a time.

Bringing it all together

A good evacuation plan is a packed bag, a decided destination, and people who know their part.

The bag holds your chargers, batteries, supplies, medications, and papers, kept fresh year-round. You've chosen where you'd go and how you'd get there, and told the people involved. Your equipment travels safely, and you lean toward leaving early and calmly. Practice it once, and it's there if you ever need it.

This ties in with the rest of the batch — the planning guide, the meds-cold guide, the oxygen-cylinder guide, and the car and DC guide all touch on leaving safely. Take them one at a time.

★ Let's pack it together

There's no need to sort this out alone. Call or text me at (330) 200-8042, and we'll build your go-bag and your plan at whatever pace feels right.

Your next small step

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

- This week: decide where you'd go, and ask if you'd be welcome.
- This week: find a bag and start it with chargers and a power bank.
- This month: add device supplies, a medication plan, and your papers.
- This month: decide how you'd get there and tell the people involved.
- Before storm season: do a calm practice grab-and-go.

✓ One step at a time is plenty

Even deciding where you'd go, today, moves your family from worried to prepared. The bag can fill up gradually.

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 packing a go-bag and planning to leave safely 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

Getting Ready to Go, in Four Steps

Calm preparation you do on an easy day



Deciding in advance is what brings the calm.

What Goes in the Go-Bag

Four kinds of things to gather

	What to pack	Why
Power	Chargers, bank, station	Keep devices running
Medications	A few days, labeled	Health on the road
Supplies	Masks, tubing, filters	Devices keep working
Papers	Plan, list, numbers	Speak for you

Your supplier and pharmacist say how much -- don't guess.

Traveling Safely With Equipment

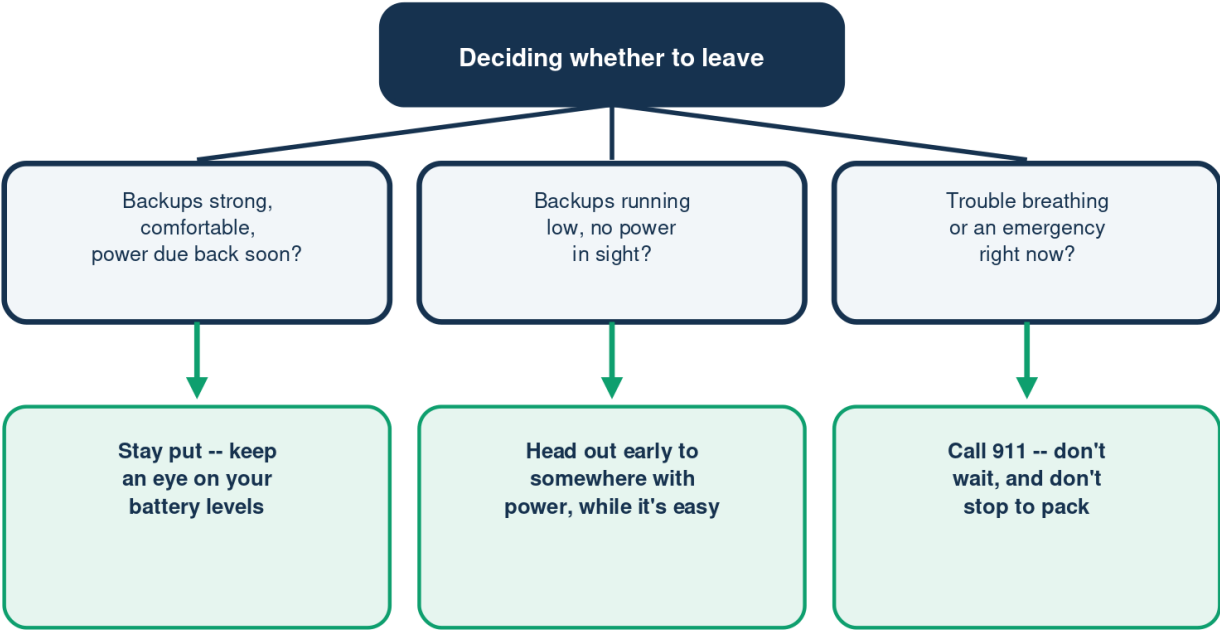
A few firm habits for the trip

	Do	Never
Oxygen cylinders	Upright, secured	Loose or on their side
Near oxygen	Fresh air, window cracked	Smoking or flame
Warming the car	Outside, in the open	Idling in a garage
Leaving	Early and calm	Waiting till too late

Idling in a closed garage makes deadly carbon monoxide.

Should You Stay or Go?

A calm gut-check during a long outage



This guide isn't medical advice -- always follow your doctor and your 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.
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— Bill

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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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