



An Extended Guide · No. 1721

Powering an Oxygen Concentrator in an Outage

Plan carefully for
its higher power needs

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. An oxygen concentrator needs more careful planning than most home equipment, so the steadiest part of your plan will always be the backup tanks from your oxygen supplier — they need no electricity at all.

Let's plan calmly for your oxygen concentrator

If you or someone you love uses an oxygen concentrator, a power outage understandably feels like a bigger worry. This guide is here to settle that worry into a clear, careful plan you can lean on.

I'm Bill, and I run Bill's Home Tech here in Portage County, Ohio. Let me say the most important thing right at the start: I'm a tech helper, not a doctor or a nurse, and nothing here is medical advice. Your oxygen supplier and your doctor decide your settings, how many backup tanks you keep, and what's safe for you. What I can help with is the power side — and, done carefully, that turns out to be a real comfort.

A concentrator is one of the more demanding devices to plan around, because it usually draws more power than something like a CPAP and often runs around the clock. That's exactly why we plan it carefully, in gentle layers, and why your supplier's backup tanks sit right at the heart of the plan. We'll go slowly, one page at a time, and you can stop and call me any time.

★ There's no rush, and no question is too small

This is just the kind of careful planning I love helping families with. Call or text me at (330) 200-8042 whenever you'd like to talk it through, at your own pace.

The whole guide, on one page

If you remember only these things, you already have the shape of a careful oxygen plan.

- ❑ Backup tanks from your oxygen supplier are your anchor — they need no power at all.
- ❑ A concentrator draws more power than many devices and often runs all day, so plan carefully.
- ❑ Never rely on a battery alone for oxygen — a battery buys time, it does not replace care.
- ❑ Ask your oxygen supplier how many backup tanks to keep and how to switch to them calmly.
- ❑ Keep spare portable-concentrator batteries charged and rotated.
- ❑ An indoor-safe battery power station can run a concentrator, but size it with your supplier.
- ❑ Register on your electric utility's medical or priority list, and tell your supplier your plan.
- ❑ If breathing is hard or your backups run low, call 911 or get to a place with power — don't wait.

! The tanks are the part with no plug

Of everything in this guide, backup tanks are the steadiest layer, because they work with no electricity whatsoever. Ask your supplier how many they recommend you keep on hand — that number is theirs to give, never mine.

Why a concentrator takes extra-careful planning

It helps to understand, in plain terms, why oxygen is different from lighter equipment.

An oxygen concentrator is a machine that pulls in room air and concentrates the oxygen for you to breathe. Doing that steadily takes real power — generally more than a device like a CPAP — and many people use their concentrator continuously, day and night. More power, drawn for more hours, is exactly why we plan it with extra care.

I won't quote you any numbers, and I'd gently steer you away from numbers you see online, because they vary from machine to machine. The real figures for your concentrator live on its label, in its manual, and with your oxygen supplier. When we plan the power side together, those are the numbers we'll use — never a guess.

- A concentrator generally draws more power than a CPAP or a nebulizer.
- Many people run it continuously, so a backup has to last longer.
- A bigger draw means any battery will run down faster than it would on a smaller device.
- The exact power it needs is on the label and known to your supplier — we plan from that.

✓ Snap a photo of the label

The easiest way to capture what your machine needs is a phone photo of the label on the back or bottom. Then your supplier — or I — can read exactly what it draws, with no guessing.

Stationary and portable concentrators

Knowing which kind you have shapes how you plan its backup.

Most oxygen users have one of two kinds — and some have both. A stationary home concentrator is the larger unit that stays plugged into the wall and runs all the time. A portable concentrator, sometimes called a POC, is a smaller unit you can carry, and it has its own rechargeable battery so it can run for a while away from an outlet.

The two plan a little differently. A stationary unit leans harder on wall power, so its outage plan leans harder on tanks and a power station. A portable unit already carries a battery, so spare, charged batteries become a key layer. Your supplier can tell you which you have and how each one behaves on backup power.

Stationary unit	Portable unit (POC)
Stays on wall power	Has its own battery
Larger, runs at home	Smaller, you carry it
Leans on tanks	Leans on batteries
Ask your supplier	Ask your supplier

★ **Not sure which you have? That's fine**

Tell me a little about your setup, or send a photo of the label, and I'll help you figure out which kind you're planning around — then we build the power plan to fit it.

Backup tanks: the layer that needs no power

If the concentrator is the part that worries you, the tanks are the part that reassures you.

Your oxygen supplier can provide backup oxygen cylinders — tanks — that deliver oxygen with no electricity at all. Because they don't depend on the power grid, a battery, or a generator, they are the steadiest, most dependable layer in your whole plan. When the power goes out, tanks are very often the first thing you reach for. Our oxygen cylinder backup guide goes deeper on keeping and using them.

How many tanks to keep, and how long to plan for, is a decision for your oxygen supplier and your doctor — never something to guess from a guide or a website. Please ask them directly, and keep the number they recommend on hand and easy to reach.

! Never let the tanks run low without a plan

Tanks are your anchor precisely because they need no power — so keep the number your supplier recommends, know how to switch to them, and top them back up promptly after you use them. If your tanks are running low during a long outage, treat that as your cue to call your supplier, relocate to a place with power, or call 911 if breathing is hard. Never wait and hope.

Keep spare batteries charged and rotated

If you have a portable concentrator, its batteries are a layer worth tending.

A portable concentrator runs on a rechargeable battery, and most people can have more than one. Spare batteries, kept charged and ready, give you real flexibility in an outage — but only if they're actually charged when you need them. A battery that quietly drained months ago is no help at all.

- Ask your supplier how many spare batteries make sense for you.
- Keep them charged the way the manual recommends, not only before a storm.
- Rotate through them so each one gets used and stays healthy.
- Keep the chargers and cords together with the batteries, not scattered about the house.

✓ Tie the charge-check to a habit

Pick a routine day — when you pay the bills, say — to glance at every battery's charge. A spare battery only reassures you if someone looked at it lately.

Using a battery power station for the concentrator

A battery power station can run a concentrator indoors — with careful sizing.

A battery power station is a large rechargeable battery in a box, with normal wall outlets on the front. You keep it charged, and when the power goes out you plug your concentrator into it. Because it burns no fuel, it makes no fumes and no carbon monoxide, so it's safe to use right there beside the chair or the bed.

Here's the honest part: because a concentrator draws more power and often runs continuously, it asks more of a power station than a lighter device would. That doesn't mean it can't be done — it means the station has to be sized carefully, using your supplier's numbers. Our sizing guide walks through how, and I'm glad to help you match a station to your machine.

✓ 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.

Two kinds of homes, two sets of needs

Where you live changes how many tanks you'll want on hand and how long you need your plan to carry you.

If you live in town or the suburbs

In town or a close-in suburb, your oxygen supplier and a hospital are often a shorter drive, and outages usually run shorter too.

- A quicker tank exchange may mean you don't store quite as many — but always keep the number your supplier recommends.
- Shorter, more predictable outages mean a power station and spare batteries may carry more of the gap.
- Relocating to family, a hospital, or a shelter with power is usually a shorter trip if it comes to that.
- Crews often reach in-town areas sooner — welcome, but never a reason to keep fewer backups than your supplier advises.

If you are out in the country on a well

Out in the country, the drive to your supplier is longer, outages often run longer, and a private well means no running water when the power's out — so your own backups carry more weight.

- Keep more backup tanks on hand, since a supply run or exchange is a bigger undertaking — ask your supplier how many.
- Plan for a longer stretch before you could realistically relocate or reach help.
- A generator to recharge a power station earns its keep here; run it outdoors only, and store fuel safely.
- Store drinking water too, so a well outage doesn't add to the worry while you tend the oxygen.

★ Let's talk through your specific setup

Every household's plan looks a little different. Tell me about your concentrator, your home, and how far you are from help, and I'll help you think through the power side, calmly and at your pace. Call (330) 200-8042.

How long a power station can run a concentrator

This is the question everyone asks — and the honest answer is that it depends, so we plan from real numbers.

How long a battery power station can run your concentrator depends on two things: how much power your machine draws, and how much energy the station holds. Because a concentrator draws more than a lighter device and often runs without stopping, the same station will run it for a shorter time than it would run, say, a CPAP overnight. That's simply the nature of a bigger, steadier draw.

I won't give you an hour figure, because a made-up number could let you down at the worst moment. Instead, we work it out from your machine's real draw and the station's real capacity — and, most importantly, we treat the station as one layer alongside your tanks, never as the whole plan. Our sizing guide walks through the thinking in plain English.

! A battery is a bridge, not the whole plan

Please never count on a power station alone to keep oxygen going through a long outage. It's there to bridge you calmly while you switch to tanks, recharge, or get to a place with power. Keep your supplier's backup tanks on hand no matter how large your battery is.

Why clean power matters for a concentrator

Sensitive equipment is happiest with smooth, steady power.

Medical equipment like a concentrator generally prefers clean, steady power — the kind that doesn't spike or waver. A good battery power station gives exactly that. If a generator is part of your plan, the smoother, cleaner kind is the friendlier choice for sensitive equipment. Our clean-power guide explains the difference in plain terms.

This is one more reason a battery power station sits so comfortably next to a concentrator: it delivers clean power quietly and indoors, with no fumes. When we set yours up, I'll make sure the power reaching your machine is the steady kind it likes.

★ I'll make sure the power is the right kind

Matching clean, steady power to your concentrator is squarely on my side of the line — the power part, not the medical part. Call (330) 200-8042 and we'll get it set up right.

Register with your utility and loop in your supplier

Two phone calls now that quietly work in your favor later.

Many electric utilities keep a list of customers who rely on medical equipment, sometimes called a medical-priority or critical-care list. Being on it doesn't guarantee the power stays on, but it's a free step that flags your home for advance notice of planned outages and for restoration crews. Our utility medical list guide walks through exactly how to sign up.

Just as important, tell your oxygen supplier what your outage plan is and ask them to check it. They can tell you how many tanks to keep, how your particular machine behaves on backup power, and how they'd like you to reach them in an emergency. Their guidance is the foundation the power plan is built on.

- Call your electric utility and ask about their medical or priority list.
- Ask your oxygen supplier how many backup tanks to keep and how to reach them fast.
- Keep both phone numbers with your written plan, where a helper could find them.

✓ A helpful extra, never a guarantee

Being on the utility's list is a wonderful safety net, but treat it as an extra — your own tanks, batteries, and power station are what you truly control.

Keeping the battery topped up over a long outage

For an outage that stretches on, you'll want a way to put energy back into your power station.

A battery power station is wonderful, but it does eventually run down. In a long outage, the usual way to refill it is a fuel-powered generator, run safely outdoors, feeding the station so the station can keep running your concentrator. Our recharging guide walks through the whole routine step by step.

There's one rule here that matters more than any other, and it's about where the generator runs. Please read the note below carefully — it's the most important safety point in this whole guide.

! 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.

When breathing is hard or backups run low

This page is here so you never have to wonder, in the moment, whether it's serious enough to act.

Backup power and backup tanks are meant to carry you calmly through a normal outage. They are never a reason to stay home when someone's breathing is getting harder or the backups are running low. If that happens, it's time to get help — and no one will ever fault you for acting early.

! If breathing is hard, call 911 — don't wait

If someone is having trouble breathing, has chest pain, seems confused, or has bluish lips or skin, call 911 right away. Don't wait to see if it passes, and don't feel you must be certain first — that is exactly what 911 is for. If your oxygen backups are running low in a long outage, treat that as your signal to call your supplier and get to a hospital or shelter with power. A battery buys time; it does not replace care.

Have a place with power ready in advance

Sometimes the safest, calmest choice is to leave — and it helps to have decided where beforehand.

Think through, on a calm day, where you'd go if the outage ran long and your backups were running low — a relative's home with power, a hospital, or a designated shelter. Knowing the place and how you'd get there turns a frightening moment into a decision you've already made. Our go-bag guide covers packing for it.

- Keep a small bag ready with spare batteries, chargers, and a copy of your plan.
- Know how you'd move your backup tanks safely if you had to travel.
- Tell whoever you'd go to, so your arrival isn't a surprise.
- If you'd need a ride, decide now who you'd call for it.

✓ Deciding in advance is what brings the calm

Most families tell me that simply choosing this ahead of time — even if they never use it — lifts a real weight off their minds.

Common Questions

The questions families ask me most about powering a concentrator, answered as warmly and honestly as I can.

Q: Can a battery power station really run my concentrator?

Often yes — but because a concentrator draws more power and runs longer than many devices, the station has to be sized carefully with your supplier's numbers. And it's always one layer alongside your tanks, never the whole plan.

Q: How long will a battery last running my oxygen?

That depends on your machine's draw and the battery's size, so I won't give a number that could let you down. We work it out from the real figures — and keep tanks on hand no matter what.

Q: Can I just rely on the concentrator and a big battery?

Please don't. Keep your supplier's backup tanks, which need no power at all, as your anchor. A battery is a bridge; the tanks are what you fall back on.

Q: Can you tell me my oxygen flow setting for backup power?

No — that's always your doctor's or supplier's call, never mine. I make sure the power reaching your machine is safe and steady; the settings stay with them.

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

Whether you're just starting to think about this or fine-tuning a plan you already have, call or text me at (330) 200-8042. We'll take it one calm step at a time.

A few gentle reminders

These aren't judgments — just the patterns I see most often, so you can step around them.

- Leaning on the concentrator and a battery alone, with no backup tanks behind them.
- Never asking the supplier how many tanks to keep, and guessing instead.
- Letting the power station or a spare battery sit unchecked for months.
- Assuming a battery will last as long on oxygen as it would on a lighter device.
- Skipping the utility registration because it feels like paperwork for another day.
- Keeping the whole plan in one person's head, where a helper can't reach it.

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

Noticing a gap is the whole point of this page. Pick one thing to fix this week — calling your supplier about tanks is a wonderful place to start — and your plan is stronger from here.

A caring checklist

Work through this at whatever pace feels right — the only deadline is the one you set.

- ☐ My oxygen supplier and doctor both know I'm building an outage plan.
- ☐ I've asked my supplier how many backup tanks to keep, and I have them on hand.
- ☐ I keep spare portable-concentrator batteries charged and rotated, if I have a portable unit.
- ☐ I have an indoor-safe battery power station, sized with my supplier and kept charged.
- ☐ I know how to switch calmly from wall power to tanks or the station.
- ☐ I'm registered on my utility's medical or priority list.
- ☐ My plan is written down where a helper could find it.
- ☐ I know the signs that mean call 911, and I have somewhere with power to go.

★ Even a few checked boxes is real progress

You don't have to finish this list today. Every box you check is another layer of protection your family can lean on. The tank question is the one I'd start with.

Practice the switch to backup, calmly

A switch-over you've practiced is one you can trust when it actually matters.

Ask your oxygen supplier to show you how to switch from your concentrator to your backup tanks, and how to run the concentrator from a power station, so you've done each step at least once before you ever need to. Practicing on a calm day, with nothing urgent happening, takes the fear out of it. Follow your supplier's guidance on every oxygen step — that part is theirs, not mine.

- Have your supplier walk you through switching to a backup tank.
- Practice plugging the concentrator into the power station and back to the wall.
- Note anything that felt awkward, so we can smooth it out before a storm.
- Keep the written steps where a helper could follow them too.

★ I'll help with the power side of the practice run

I'm glad to set up the power station and rehearse the plug-in-and-switch part with you, while your supplier guides the oxygen part. Call or text (330) 200-8042 to set up a visit.

What I help with — and what I don't

Being clear about this boundary is part of doing right by you, especially with something as important as oxygen.

Bill helps with	Your supplier or doctor's call
Choosing and sizing a power station	How many tanks to keep
Setting up clean, steady power	Your oxygen flow setting
Rehearsing the plug-in with you	How your machine runs on backup
Lining up a licensed electrician	When to seek emergency care

★ **A boundary I take seriously**

I care about your family's safety, which is exactly why I stay firmly on my side of this line. For anything about tanks, settings, or your health, always call your oxygen supplier or doctor first.

Bringing it all together

A careful oxygen plan is really just a few dependable layers, chosen with your supplier and tried out once in advance.

Your supplier's backup tanks are the anchor, needing no power at all. Spare portable-concentrator batteries and an indoor-safe power station — sized with your supplier — carry you through the hours, and a generator run safely outdoors can recharge the station over a long outage. The utility registration and a written, practiced plan tie it all together, and a place to go is there if you ever need it.

Because a concentrator draws more power and often runs all the time, the one thing I'll gently repeat is this: never lean on a battery alone. Keep the tanks your supplier recommends, and you have the steadiest foundation there is.

★ Let's build yours together, one piece at a time

There's no need to solve all of this in one sitting. Call or text me at (330) 200-8042, and we'll work through the power side at whatever pace feels right for your family.

Questions worth bringing to your supplier and doctor

Some questions belong with the people who know your health, not with me — here's how to ask them well.

Q: What should I ask my oxygen supplier?

How many backup tanks to keep on hand, how to switch to them calmly, how your particular machine behaves on backup power, and how to reach them quickly in an outage.

Q: What should I ask about my portable concentrator?

How many spare batteries make sense, how to keep them charged and rotated, and how long the machine is meant to run on each battery for your situation.

Q: What should I ask my doctor?

Which warning signs matter most for you, whether anything should change on backup power, and when they want you to call 911 versus the office.

Q: What can I ask Bill?

How to choose and size a power station for your machine, how to get clean and steady power to it, and how to rehearse the switch safely — the power side, never the medical side.

✓ I'm glad to help you prepare the questions

If you're not sure how to raise this with your supplier or doctor, call me first — I can help you think through what to ask, even though the answers themselves are theirs to give.

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 keeping an oxygen concentrator powered in an outage 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.

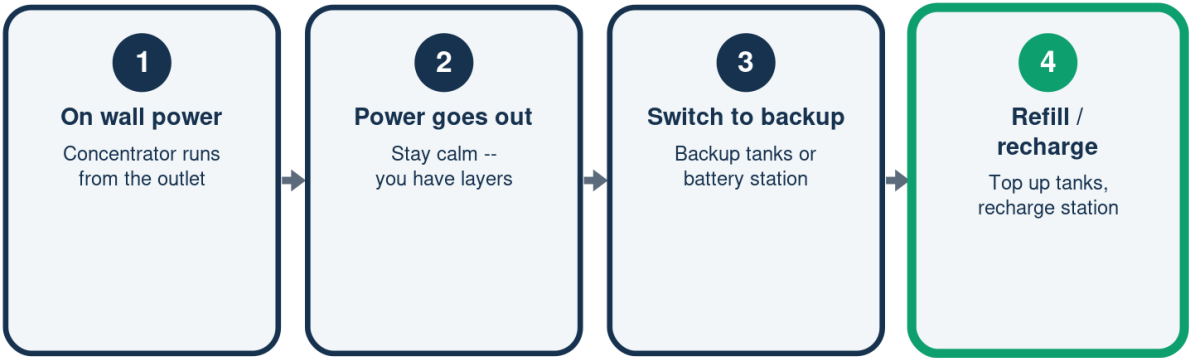
When you'd rather have a hand, that's exactly what I do. I come to your home, work at your pace, and never make you feel rushed or silly for asking. I'll help you choose and set up a battery power station, get the equipment your family depends on connected safely, and test the whole plan before you ever 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

When the Power Goes Out

A calm, practiced switch to backup



Tanks need no power -- they are your steady anchor.

Concentrator vs. CPAP Power Need

Why oxygen asks for extra planning

	Concentrator	CPAP
Power draw	Higher	Lower
Runs when	Often all day	At night
Battery lasts	Shorter	Longer

General comparison only – your supplier has your machine's numbers.

Your Oxygen Backup Layers

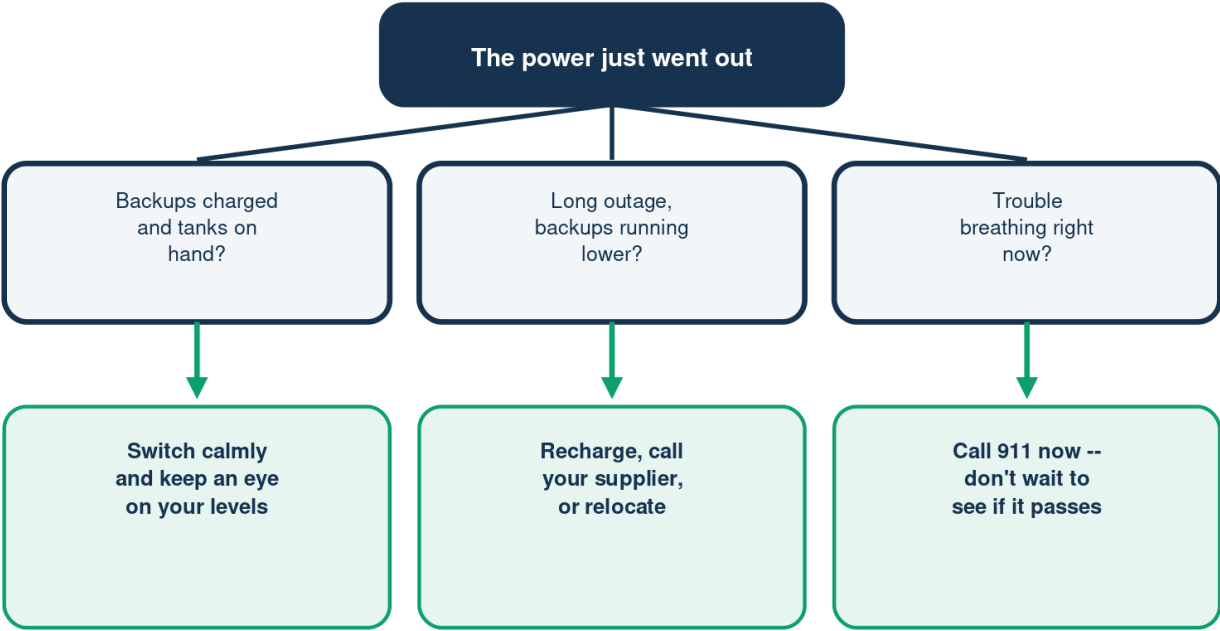
Each layer covers for the others

	Needs power?	Who to ask
Backup tanks	No	Oxygen supplier
Spare POC battery	Recharge it	Supplier
Power station	Yes	Bill + supplier
Generator	Fuel, outdoors	Bill

Tanks need no power at all -- keep the number your supplier advises.

Oxygen User, Power's Out -- What Now?

A calm gut-check, layer by layer



This is not medical advice -- always follow your doctor and your oxygen 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

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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