



An Extended Guide · No. 1741

Powering a Ventilator or BiPAP in an Outage

Plan it with your care team
— never a battery alone

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. A ventilator or breathing-support device is life-sustaining for many people, so this is the guide where the care-team plan matters most. Design your outage plan WITH your doctor, your respiratory therapist, and your equipment supplier, follow their emergency instructions above all, and never rely on a backup battery alone. If breathing is ever in trouble, call 911 without hesitation.

The most important plan to get right — together

If you or someone you love depends on a ventilator or a breathing-support device like a BiPAP, an outage plan isn't just convenience — it's safety. And because the stakes are this high, this is the guide where I'll say most firmly: the plan belongs to your care team.

I'm Bill, and I run Bill's Home Tech here in Portage County, Ohio. I help with the power side of many kinds of medical equipment, but I want to be especially clear here: for life-sustaining breathing equipment, your doctor, your respiratory therapist, and your equipment supplier design the emergency plan. My job is to support the power part of the plan they give you — never to replace it, and never to make any medical call.

With that said firmly, there's real, comforting work we can do together on the power side — making sure the batteries your team relies on stay charged, that a battery station can bridge a gap, and that everything is tested and ready. Let's do that part well.

★ The care team leads; I support the power

For breathing equipment, follow your care team's plan first, always. When you want a hand with the power side of it, call or text me at (330) 200-8042.

The whole guide, on one page

If you remember only these things, you'll keep the power side strong — with your team leading.

- ❑ Design the emergency plan WITH your doctor, respiratory therapist, and supplier — they lead.
- ❑ Follow your care team's emergency instructions above anything in this guide.
- ❑ Know your device's own batteries — internal and external — and keep them charged.
- ❑ A battery power station can bridge a gap, but it is one layer, never the whole plan.
- ❑ Life-sustaining equipment needs several layers plus a plan to reach a hospital.
- ❑ Register as a high priority with your utility, and tell everyone your plan.
- ❑ Any generator runs outdoors only — but the battery is what runs safely indoors.
- ❑ If breathing is ever in trouble, call 911 immediately — do not wait.

! Never rely on a battery alone for breathing support

For life-sustaining equipment, a battery buys time to get help — it is never the whole answer. Your care team's plan and a fast path to a hospital are the foundation.

This is a care-team plan, first and always

Before any equipment talk, understand that the plan itself comes from your medical team.

For breathing-support equipment, the emergency plan is a medical document, not a do-it-yourself project. Your doctor and respiratory therapist decide how long the device must run, what the settings are, what warning signs mean act now, and when you must get to a hospital. Your equipment supplier knows your specific machine, its batteries, and how they should be used. Ask them all for a written emergency plan, and let everything else — including anything I help with — fit inside it.

- Ask your doctor and respiratory therapist for a written outage plan.
- Ask your supplier exactly how your device and its batteries should be used in an outage.
- Follow that plan above anything in this guide, without exception.
- Re-check the plan with your team whenever your equipment or health changes.

★ I fit inside their plan, never around it

Whatever I help with on the power side sits inside the plan your care team gives you. If anything I suggest ever seems to conflict with their guidance, theirs wins — every time.

Know your device's own batteries

Most breathing-support devices have their own batteries — the first and fastest layer.

Many ventilators and BiPAP units have an internal battery, and often the option of external batteries too, so they keep running for a time the instant wall power is lost, with nothing to plug in or switch on. These are usually your first line of defense, and your supplier can tell you how long each lasts and how to keep them healthy. Because these numbers are so important and so specific to your device, I'll never guess them — always get them from your supplier.

- Ask your supplier whether your device has an internal battery, and how long it runs.
- Ask whether external or spare batteries are available, and how many they recommend.
- Ask how to keep every battery charged and healthy over time.
- Keep all of them charged and ready — they are your fastest layer.

✓ Keep every device battery topped up

The device's own batteries only help if they're charged. Keeping them full, following your supplier's guidance, is one of the most important habits there is.

A battery power station as a bridge

An indoor-safe battery station can extend your runtime — as one layer, with your team's blessing.

Beyond the device's own batteries, a battery power station can run or recharge your equipment for longer, safely indoors and with no fumes — a valuable bridge in an outage. But for life-sustaining equipment, it is one layer in a bigger plan, never the whole plan. Ask your supplier whether and how to use a battery station with your specific device, including whether it delivers the clean, steady power your machine needs. Our sizing guide can help match its capacity to your team's recommended hours.

✓ 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 makes no fumes, so it can run beside the bed — but for breathing support it is a bridge to more help, not a stand-alone answer. Use it as one layer within your care team's plan.

Clean, steady power matters here

Sensitive breathing equipment prefers power that's smooth, not rough.

Life-sustaining electronics generally do best on clean, steady power — the kind a good battery power station provides, and the kind a clean-power ('pure sine wave') inverter provides if you ever run from the car. Rough power from a cheap inverter or a basic generator can be hard on delicate equipment. Ask your supplier what kind of power your device needs and which backup sources are suitable, and follow their answer — this is a detail worth getting exactly right.

- Ask your supplier what power your device needs, and which sources suit it.
- A battery power station generally provides clean, steady power.
- If running from the car, use a clean-power ('pure sine wave') inverter, if your supplier okays it.
- Don't run sensitive breathing equipment on rough or uncertain power.

★ I'll help you get the power quality right

Matching your device to clean, suitable power is exactly the kind of detail I sweat on your behalf — guided always by what your supplier says your machine needs.

If a generator is part of the plan

A generator can extend a long outage — outdoors only, and to recharge, not to run the device directly.

For a long outage, a generator's best role is to recharge your battery station and device batteries, outdoors, so the clean-powered battery keeps running your equipment indoors. It is never something to run inside or to rely on as the sole power for a ventilator. And it comes with the one rule that never bends — doubly important when someone's breathing depends on staying safe.

! 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. For a household with breathing-support equipment, the carbon-monoxide rule is absolutely non-negotiable: a generator runs outdoors only, at least 20 feet from the house, exhaust pointed away, never in a garage or any enclosed space. Use it to recharge the battery, which then safely runs the equipment indoors — and keep working CO alarms on every level.

For breathing support, layers are essential

The higher the stakes, the more this must never rest on one thing.

For everyday equipment, layering is wise. For life-sustaining breathing support, it is essential. Your care team will likely want several layers working together: the device's own batteries, external or spare batteries, a battery power station, a way to recharge, and — most importantly — a fast, decided path to a hospital. No single layer, however good, is enough on its own. The whole point of a layered plan here is that if any one part falls short, another is already ready, and getting to professional care is always an option on the table.

- The device's internal and external batteries — your fastest layer.
- A battery power station to extend runtime, with clean power.
- A way to recharge for a long outage — a generator, outdoors, or the car.
- A fast, decided path to a hospital — the most important layer of all.

! Never one layer — always several, plus a hospital path

For breathing support, a single point of failure is never acceptable. Several layers, and a ready way to reach a hospital, are the foundation your care team will build on.

Two kinds of homes, two sets of needs

Where you live matters even more for breathing support, because it changes how fast you could reach a hospital.

If you live in town or the suburbs

In town or a close-in suburb, a hospital is usually a short drive and outages tend to be shorter — but the layered plan and fast path to care still come first.

- A hospital is often close, which is a real comfort for the plan.
- Shorter typical outages may mean the battery layers carry more of the gap.
- Your supplier may be nearby for a quick battery swap or help.
- Even so, keep every layer and follow your care team's plan exactly.

If you are out in the country on a well

Out in the country, a hospital is farther, outages run longer, and a private well adds to the load — so your care team may want more battery layers, a firm recharging plan, and an earlier decision to relocate.

- Plan for more runtime and a solid way to recharge, since power may be days away.
- Decide sooner about heading for a hospital, because the drive is longer.
- Keep more spare and external batteries on hand, since a supply run is far.
- Discuss with your care team whether staying home in a long rural outage is safe for you.

★ Let's support your team's plan for your home

Tell me your equipment and how far you are from a hospital, and I'll help with the power side of the plan your care team designs. Call (330) 200-8042.

Register as a high priority, and tell everyone

For life-sustaining equipment, being on every list and known to everyone matters more than ever.

Make sure your utility knows your home runs life-sustaining equipment — ask specifically about their highest medical or life-support priority. Being on that list can mean advance notice and attention from restoration crews, though it never guarantees the power. Beyond the utility, tell your close family, your neighbors, and anyone who might help, so people know to check on you fast in an outage. Our guides on registering with your utility and talking to your power company cover the details.

- Ask your utility about their highest medical or life-support priority.
- Confirm your contact details with them are current.
- Tell family, neighbors, and helpers about your equipment and your plan.
- Make sure more than one person could act fast if the power fails.

✓ Being known saves precious time

The more people who know your home depends on breathing equipment, the faster help arrives when it matters. Tell everyone who might help.

A fast path to a hospital is part of the plan

For life-sustaining equipment, relocating to care isn't a last resort — it's a planned option.

With breathing support, getting to a hospital is not a failure of the plan; it is part of the plan, decided in advance. Talk with your care team about when you should head for a hospital in an outage, which hospital, and how you'd get there. For many households, especially far from help, the safest plan in a long outage is to relocate early to a place with reliable power and medical care. Have that path mapped out on a calm day, so it's a clear, ready choice and not a frightening scramble.

- Ask your care team when an outage means you should go to a hospital.
- Decide which hospital, and exactly how you'd get there.
- Consider relocating early in a long outage, before backups run low.
- Keep a go-bag ready so leaving is quick — our go-bag guide covers it.

! Going to the hospital is the plan working

For breathing support, choosing to get to professional care is a smart, planned move — never a sign the plan failed. Decide the path in advance so it's ready when you need it.

When to call 911 — with a low threshold

For breathing support, the threshold for calling is low, on purpose.

This matters more here than anywhere else in the batch, so I'll say it plainly: if breathing becomes difficult, if the device fails and backups are limited, if lips or skin look bluish, or if the person seems confused or unusually drowsy — call 911 immediately. Do not wait to see if it improves, and do not try to solve the power problem first. With life-sustaining equipment, calling early is always right. Follow whatever specific instructions your care team has given you, and when in doubt, call.

! When breathing is in doubt, call 911 now

A backup battery exists to buy the minutes it takes for help to arrive — not to let you wait out a breathing emergency. For any trouble breathing, call 911 immediately and follow your care team's instructions.

Test the power side — with your team's blessing

Practice the parts that are safe to practice, exactly as your team advises.

Testing matters, but with life-sustaining equipment it must be done carefully and with your care team's approval. Some things — keeping device batteries charged, testing CO alarms, timing a recharge, packing and rehearsing a go-bag — you can practice freely. Anything that involves running the actual breathing device on backup power should be done only as your supplier and care team direct. Ask them how to test safely, and never improvise with the device someone's breathing depends on.

- Freely test: charging habits, CO alarms, recharge timing, the go-bag.
- Only as your team directs: running the breathing device itself on backup.
- Ask your supplier how to test the power side safely for your device.
- Never experiment with a life-sustaining device — follow their guidance.

★ I'll test the safe parts with you

I'm glad to help you keep batteries charged, test alarms, time a recharge, and ready a go-bag. Anything touching the breathing device itself, we do only as your care team directs.

What I help with — and what I don't

This boundary is firmest of all here, and I hold it carefully.

Bill helps with	Always your care team's role
Keeping batteries charged & ready	The whole emergency plan
Setting up a battery station bridge	Device settings & how long to run
Safe generator placement & recharging	When to go to the hospital
Testing alarms and the go-bag	Any medical judgment or care

★ **A boundary I take very seriously**

With breathing support, I stay firmly on the power side and defer everything medical to your doctor, respiratory therapist, and supplier. Their plan leads; I support it. I'll tell you so every time.

A few gentle — but important — reminders

These matter more here than anywhere, so I'll be direct.

- Treating a battery as the whole plan, instead of one layer with a hospital path behind it.
- Letting the device's own batteries sit uncharged.
- Not having a written emergency plan from the care team.
- Waiting to call 911 during a breathing problem to try to fix the power first.
- Ever running a generator indoors — an unthinkable risk with breathing equipment.

! If any of these is true, fix it right away

This is the guide where I'll ask you not to wait. If a battery is your only layer, or the device batteries are flat, or there's no written plan — please address it now, with your care team.

A caring checklist

Work through it with your care team — these are the pieces that matter most.

- ☐ My care team has given me a written outage emergency plan.
- ☐ I know my device's batteries and keep them all charged.
- ☐ I have a battery station bridge, sized and okayed by my supplier.
- ☐ I have clean, suitable power for the device, as my supplier specified.
- ☐ I have several layers, not just one, plus a way to recharge.
- ☐ I have a fast, decided path to a hospital.
- ☐ I'm registered as a high priority with my utility, and people know my plan.
- ☐ I know to call 911 immediately for any breathing trouble.

★ Finish this one with your team

Of all the checklists in this batch, this is the one to complete carefully and together with your care team. I'll help with every power line on it.

Questions to bring to your care team

These are theirs to answer — and they matter enormously.

Q: What should I ask my doctor and respiratory therapist?

For a written outage emergency plan: how long the device must run, the warning signs that mean act, when to go to a hospital, and whether staying home in a long outage is safe for you.

Q: What should I ask my equipment supplier?

How long the device's batteries last, how many external or spare batteries to keep, what power the device needs, and how to test the power side safely.

Q: What should I ask my utility?

About their highest life-support or medical priority, and how to make sure your home is flagged as running life-sustaining equipment.

Q: What can Bill help with?

The power side only — keeping batteries charged, a battery station bridge, safe recharging, testing the safe parts, and readying a go-bag.

✓ I'll help you prepare the questions

Not sure how to raise all this with your team? Call me first and I'll help you write down what to ask — though the answers are always theirs.

Common Questions

The questions families ask me most about breathing equipment, answered honestly and carefully.

Q: Can a battery keep my ventilator running through an outage?

It can help, as one layer — but never rely on it alone. Life-sustaining equipment needs several layers and a fast path to a hospital, all designed by your care team.

Q: How long will my device run on its batteries?

That's specific to your device — your supplier will tell you. I'll never guess a number for something this important; always get it from them.

Q: Is a battery station safe to use with a BiPAP or ventilator?

It's indoor-safe and gives clean power, but whether and how to use it with your device is your supplier's call. Ask them, and follow their guidance exactly.

Q: When should I go to the hospital in an outage?

That's for your care team to define in advance — and going is part of the plan, not a failure. For any breathing trouble, call 911 immediately.

★ I'm here for the power side, whenever you need it

Your care team leads on everything medical. For the power side of their plan — batteries, a station, safe recharging, testing — call or text me at (330) 200-8042. I'll support their plan with care.

Bringing it all together

For breathing support, the plan is your care team's — with a strong power side built underneath it.

Your doctor, respiratory therapist, and supplier design the emergency plan and lead on everything medical. Underneath it, the power side is layered and sturdy: the device's own batteries kept charged, a clean-power battery station to bridge a gap, a safe way to recharge in a long outage, a high-priority utility registration, and — above all — a fast, decided path to a hospital. And the threshold to call 911 is low, on purpose. Never rely on a battery alone; that is the heart of it.

This draws on the whole batch — the planning, sizing, oxygen, recharging, and go-bag guides — but always inside your care team's plan. Take them one at a time.

★ Let me support your team's plan

There's no need to handle the power side alone. Call or text me at (330) 200-8042, and I'll build a strong, tested power foundation under the plan your care team gives you.

Your next small step

Small, doable steps in a gentle order — with your care team leading.

- This week: ask your care team for a written outage emergency plan.
- This week: make sure every device battery is charged.
- This month: ask your supplier about a battery station bridge and clean power.
- This month: register as a high priority with your utility, and map your hospital path.
- Before storm season: test the safe parts and ready a go-bag, with your team's blessing.

✓ One step at a time, together

Even asking your care team for a written plan today is the most important first step.
The power side follows from there, and I'll help.

A word for families

This is a lot to carry — and you don't have to carry the power side alone.

If your family depends on breathing-support equipment, I know how heavy this responsibility can feel. Please hear two things. First, you are doing exactly the right thing by planning carefully and leaning on your care team — that's what keeps everyone safest. Second, the power side, which can feel technical and worrying, is something I'm glad to take on with you: the batteries, the station, the safe recharging, the testing. You focus on your loved one and your care team's guidance; let me handle the wires and the watts.

★ You focus on care; I'll handle the power

This is meaningful work to me, and I treat it with the seriousness it deserves. Call (330) 200-8042 whenever you'd like a steady hand with the power side of your family's plan.

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 the power side of your breathing-equipment plan 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.

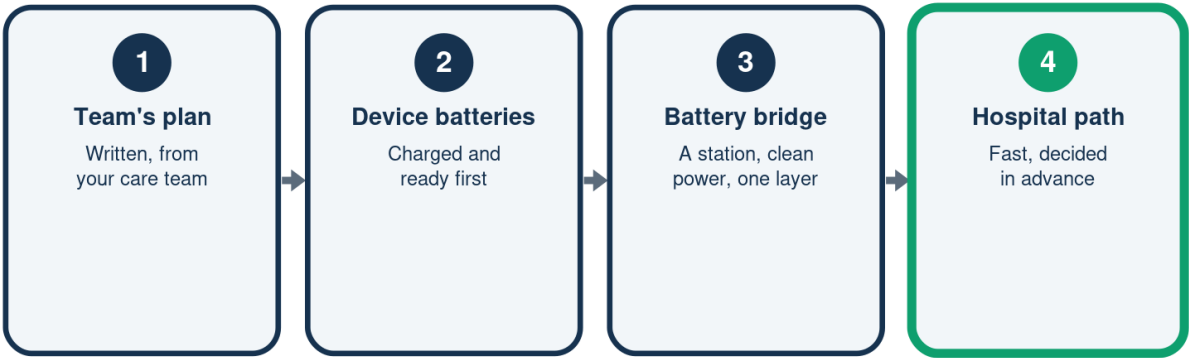
When you'd rather have a hand, that's exactly what I do. I come to your home, work at your pace, and never make you feel rushed or silly for asking. I'll help you choose and set up a battery power station, get the equipment your family depends on connected safely, and test the whole plan before you ever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

Care team leads; the power side supports



Never rely on a battery alone for breathing support.

Layers for Breathing Support

Never one thing -- always several, plus care

	Layer	Its role
Device batteries	Internal, external	Fastest layer
Battery station	Clean power bridge	Extends runtime
Recharge	Generator outdoors	For long outages
Hospital path	Decided in advance	The key layer

Your care team designs the plan; get every number from them.

Who Leads on What

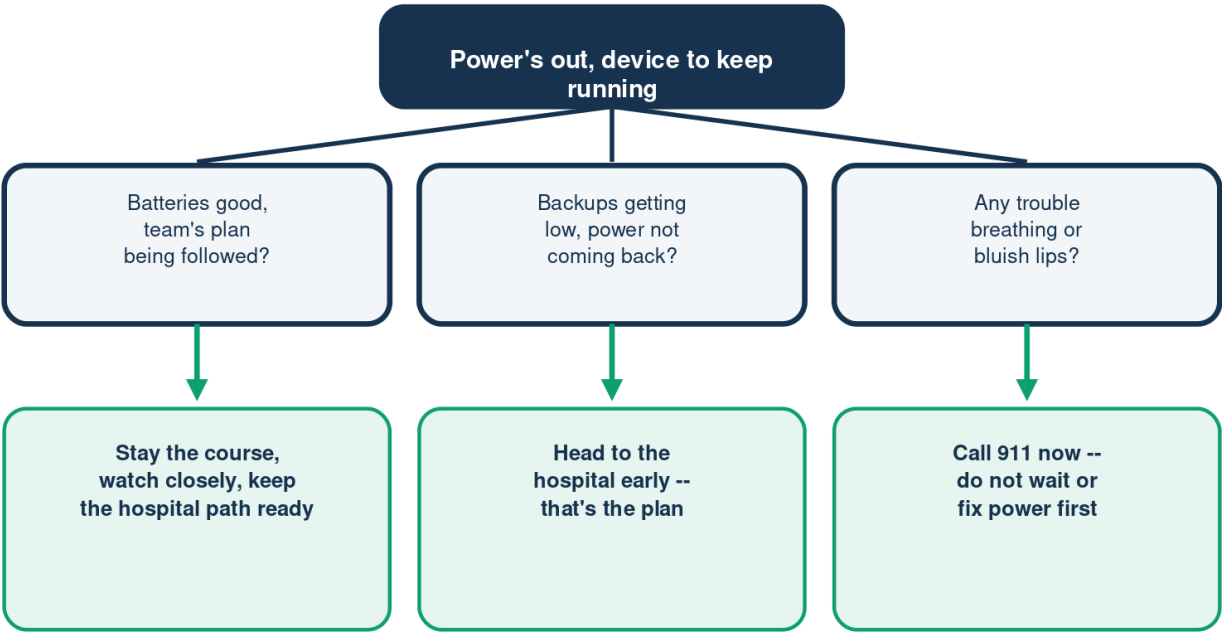
A boundary I hold especially firmly here

	Your care team	Bill (power side)
The emergency plan	Designs it	Supports it
Device & settings	Decides	Never touches
When to go in	Defines it	Defers to them
Batteries & recharge	Advises	Sets up safely

For breathing support, the care team leads on everything medical.

During an Outage With Breathing Equipment

A calm gut-check -- with a low threshold to call



This guide isn't medical advice -- follow your care team's plan, and call 911 immediately for any breathing trouble.
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,
no fine print. That is how I would want to be treated.

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Bill@BillsHomeTech.com · Mon–Sat 9:00 AM – 7:30 PM

— 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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