



An Extended Guide · No. 1441

Your Outage Game Plan

A calm, ready plan for the
next time the power quits

Tech Made Simple — Service Made Personal

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✓ The best news first — this one is safe indoors

Here is the best news about a portable power station, and the reason it earns a place in your home: it is a big rechargeable battery in a case, not an engine. It burns no fuel, so it gives off no exhaust and no carbon monoxide — the invisible, deadly gas that makes a gas generator a strictly outdoors-only machine. That means a power station is safe to use right inside your home, in any room, with the windows closed — beside your chair, on the nightstand, next to a medical device. A few simple habits keep it that way: charge it with the cord it came with, give it a little air while it works (don't bury it under a blanket or shut it in a tight cabinet), keep it away from water and from baking heat, and never use one that is cracked, soaked, or swollen. Because it's safe indoors, a power station can wait ready right where you'll need it — by your chair or the bedroom — so when the lights go out, your plan is already sitting there, calm and close at hand.

A calm, ready plan for the next time the power quits

An outage is far less frightening when you've thought it through ahead of time. With a charged power station and a simple plan, you know exactly what to do the moment the lights go out — what to plug in, what to leave alone, and how to keep going. This guide helps you build that plan, one calm step at a time.

I'm Bill, and I run Bill's Home Tech here in Portage County, Ohio. I've spent 30-plus years helping folks feel ready instead of rattled, patiently and without the jargon. Think of this as the two of us sitting down at the kitchen table to write out your plan together.

You don't need to be a prepper or a planner by nature. The whole thing fits on a single sheet of paper, and most of it you do once and then simply keep ready. When you've got a plan, an outage becomes an inconvenience instead of an emergency.

★ There's nothing to buy from me

I don't sell power stations and I earn no commission, so this is honest help with no angle. If you'd like a hand building your plan or sizing your backup, call or text me at (330) 200-8042 and we'll work it out together.

Before, during, and after — on one page

A good outage plan has three simple parts. Here's the whole thing in a nutshell.

- ❑ Before: keep the station charged and handy, and make a short list of what you'd truly want running.
- ❑ Before: know your recharge options, and on a well, store drinking water since the pump will be down.
- ❑ During: plug in the essentials, run them in turns, and don't waste power on heat-makers.
- ❑ During: keep the fridge closed, recharge from the car or sun as you go, and save phone battery for emergencies.
- ❑ After: recharge the station fully, and jot down what you'd change for next time.
- ❑ For medical needs and 240-volt well pumps, the station is one layer — plan backups and a generator too.

✓ One line to hold onto

The plan does the worrying so you don't have to. Charge it, list it, and practice it once — and the real night takes care of itself.

Before: keep it charged and ready

The most important step happens long before any storm: a station that's charged and within reach. An empty one in a far closet helps no one.

Keep it topped up. Many folks leave it plugged in and full, or set a reminder to charge it every so often, so it's never caught empty when the weather turns. A battery slowly self-discharges just sitting, so an occasional top-up is part of the routine.

Keep it handy, too. Because it's silent and safe indoors, it can live right in your living space — near your chair, by the bed, or wherever you'd reach for it in the dark. Store a couple of cords right alongside it so everything you need is in one spot when the moment comes.

✓ A full battery is the whole foundation

Everything else in this plan rests on one thing: the station being charged when you need it. Pick a habit — always plugged in, or topped up on the first of the month — and stick to it.

Before: make your must-run list

Knowing in advance what you'll power takes all the guesswork out of a dark, stressful moment. A little list is worth a great deal.

Walk your home on a calm day and ask, 'If the power were out, what would I truly want running?' Write it down. For most folks it's a short, comforting list: phones, the internet, a lamp or two, a fan, maybe a CPAP at night, and the fridge nursed along in cycles.

Keep it honest and in order of importance, so if power gets tight you know what comes first. Leave the big heat-makers off it — space heaters, hair dryers, the microwave — because a station can't carry those anyway. Our essentials guide goes deeper on what belongs on the list and what doesn't.

★ Bring me your list

That little must-run list is the heart of the whole plan — and it's just what tells us whether your station is the right size. Jot it down and text me a photo, and I'll help you check it. (330) 200-8042.

Before: know how you'll refill it

A station holds a fixed amount of power, so for anything but a short outage, your refill plan matters as much as the station itself.

For a short outage

Often you won't need to refill at all — a charged station carries most homes through the common few-hour outage with power to spare. When the grid comes back, you simply plug it in and top it off for next time.

For a long one

If an outage drags on, you'll want a way to put power back in. The car's 12-volt socket trickles some in while the engine runs, and portable solar panels refill it for free in good sun. Knowing which you'll lean on — and having the cables ready — turns a long outage from a worry into a routine. Our recharging and solar-panels guides cover both.

✓ Match the refill to the outage you expect

In town, where outages are usually short, the wall is often all you need. Out in the country, where they can run for days, plan on solar or the car from the start — and buy the cables before you need them.

Before: store water if you're on a well

This one is easy to forget until it's too late. If your water comes from a well, the power going out means the water stops too.

A well pump runs on electricity, so when the power quits, so does your water — for drinking, cooking, flushing, and the animals. And here's the hard truth this plan won't sugarcoat: most well pumps are 240-volt with a big starting surge, and a portable power station cannot run one. So the answer isn't to power the pump; it's to store water ahead of time.

Keep a sensible supply of drinking water put by, plus some for washing and flushing, sized to how long your outages tend to run. Rotate it so it stays fresh. It's the simplest, surest part of a rural outage plan, and it costs almost nothing.

! On a well, water is the first thing to plan

Don't count on the station for the pump — that's a generator's job. Count on stored water instead. It's the one preparation rural folks most often skip and most often wish they hadn't.

Before: a plan for medical devices

If someone in the home depends on a powered device, a power station is a real comfort — but it should be one layer of a plan, never the whole of it.

A station is wonderful for a CPAP overnight or for charging a device's own batteries, and its clean, quiet power is gentle on sensitive equipment. But a battery can run down, so it shouldn't be your only safeguard. Build in more than one layer, so no single failure leaves you stranded.

Talk with the device's supplier about backup batteries and, for oxygen, backup tanks that need no power at all. Ask your electric utility whether they keep a medical-needs registry, which can mean priority attention during an outage. And keep the supplier's and utility's numbers with your written plan.

! For medical needs, layers matter most

A power station is a fine layer, not a lifeline all by itself. Backup batteries, oxygen tanks that need no power, your utility's medical registry, and a plan to reach care if an outage runs long — please put several layers in place, and talk it through with the device maker and your doctor.

During: plug in the essentials and conserve

When the lights go out, your plan is already made — now it's just a matter of working it, calmly.

Bring out the station, switch on the AC side, and plug in the top of your must-run list: phones, the internet, a lamp, a fan, a medical device if you have one. Because it's safe indoors, you can set it right where you need it and never think about fumes.

Then conserve. You don't have to run everything at once — charge phones for a while, then switch to the fridge for a bit, then back. Running loads in turns, and unplugging what you're not using, stretches the battery much further. And keep the heat-makers off it entirely; they'll drain it in no time.

✓ Cycle your loads, don't pile them on

Think of the battery as a budget to spend wisely across the outage. A little to the phones, a little to the fridge, a little to a lamp — taking turns — lasts far longer than trying to run it all at once.

During: keep the fridge closed and cycle it

Food is one of the biggest outage worries, and the good news is that a little discipline and a station handle it well.

First rule: keep the doors shut. A closed refrigerator keeps food safe for about four hours, and a full freezer for around forty-eight — but only if you're not opening them. Every peek lets the cold out, so decide what you want before you open, and close it quickly.

A good-sized station can nurse a fridge along in cycles, since a fridge runs on and off anyway. Give it a run to pull the temperature down, let it rest while you power other things, then run it again. If perishable food sits above forty degrees for more than four hours, though, throw it out — when in doubt, don't risk it. Our fridge-in-an-outage guide covers the food safety in full.

✓ A cheap thermometer earns its keep

An inexpensive appliance thermometer in the fridge takes all the guesswork out of it. You'll know at a glance whether the food is still in the safe range, instead of wondering.

Two kinds of homes, two sets of needs

The same plan shifts a bit depending on where you live, because outages and water work differently in town than out on a well. Here's how the game plan changes.

If you live in town or the suburbs

Close to town, or in an apartment or condo, outages tend to be short, and your city water keeps flowing whether the power's on or not. Your plan is mostly about comfort and connection for a few hours.

- A charged station covers the essentials — phones, internet, a lamp, a fan, the fridge in cycles — for the common short outage, quietly and indoors.
- You'll usually recharge from the wall once the grid returns, with no need for solar or the car.
- Where a generator isn't allowed, like most apartments, the station may be your whole backup — and a fine one.
- Keep the plan simple: charge it, list your essentials, and know where the cords are.

If you are out in the country on a well

Out in the country, plan for more. Outages run longer, and when the power stops your well pump stops with it — so water and refilling both move to the top of the list.

- Store drinking water ahead of time, because the station can't run a 240-volt well pump — that stays a generator's job.
- Plan to refill the station from solar or the car, since a rural outage can outlast a single charge.
- Pair it with a generator: the station runs the quiet essentials indoors, the generator handles the pump and heavy loads outside.
- Keep more days of everything — water, phone charge, a plan to reach help — since the roads and the line crews are farther away.

★ Let's tailor the plan to your home

Town or country, apartment or farm, I'll help you shape a plan that fits — and size a station and any generator without overspending. Call (330) 200-8042.

During: put power back as you use it

For a long outage, refilling the station along the way is what turns a fixed battery into power that keeps on going.

If the sun's out, set up your solar panels early in the day and let them refill the station while you go about things — free, silent power coming back in. Aim them at the sun and move them once or twice as it crosses the sky for the best result.

No sun, or nighttime? A cable to the car's 12-volt socket trickles power in while the engine runs — a slow but steady lifeline. Just don't leave it charging with the engine off, or you may flatten the car's own battery when you can least afford to.

✓ Refill during the day, spend at night

A natural rhythm in a long outage: let solar fill the station through the sunny hours, then draw it down for lights and comfort after dark. Work with the day and the battery goes a lot further.

During: keep phones ready for emergencies

In an outage, a charged phone is your link to help, to news, and to family. Protect that link on purpose.

Keep phones topped up early rather than waiting until they're low, and resist the pull to pass the dark hours scrolling — that's the fastest way to an empty battery right when you might need to call someone. A power station keeps everyone's phone alive for a long time on very little of its own charge, so this is an easy one to get right.

Keeping the internet up helps too, since your Wi-Fi router and modem sip almost nothing and keep you connected — and can keep a cordless-phone base or a medical-alert base working. Put those small, vital things near the top of your list.

✓ Charge phones first, entertain second

Make it a rule for the household: phones get topped up before anyone uses battery on games or videos. The point of the power in an outage is to keep you safe and reachable first of all.

After: recharge fully and note what you learned

When the power comes back, two quick steps get you ready for next time and make each outage easier than the last.

First, recharge the station all the way to full and put it back in its ready spot with its cords. It's tempting to leave it half-empty in the corner, but the next outage never sends a warning — get it topped up while you're thinking of it.

Second, take five minutes to note what worked and what didn't. Did the battery last as long as you hoped? Was anything not on your list that you wished you'd planned for? Did you have enough water, enough cords, enough charge? Those small notes are how a good plan becomes a great one.

✓ Every outage is a free rehearsal

The best-prepared folks treat each outage as practice. A few honest notes afterward — and a quick fix to the plan — mean the next one goes even smoother. You're building a habit, not just weathering a night.

Your written one-page plan

Everything above fits on a single sheet. Fill in these lines, and you've got a plan anyone in the house can follow in the dark.

- ☐ Where the charged station lives, and where its cords are.
- ☐ The must-run list, in order of importance.
- ☐ How you'll recharge it: wall, car, or solar — and where the cables are.
- ☐ Where the stored water is, if you're on a well.
- ☐ Medical-device backups, plus the supplier and utility phone numbers.
- ☐ One line: keep the fridge closed, cycle the loads, save the phones.

✓ Write it for the scared version of you

Write the plan plainly enough that you could follow it by flashlight, flustered, at 2 a.m. — because that's exactly when you'll read it. Simple and clear beats clever every time.

Practice the plan once

A plan you've never tried is really just a hope. One quiet rehearsal turns it into something you can trust.

Pick a calm afternoon and run a pretend outage. Bring out the station, switch on the AC side, and plug in your essentials — the lamp, the router, your phone — just as you would for real. Make sure you can find everything and that it all works the way you expect.

If you'll ever recharge from solar or the car, try that once too, so the cables and connections aren't a mystery in the moment. Ten unhurried minutes now means no fumbling later, and it often turns up a small gap in the plan while it's easy to fix.

★ I'll run the rehearsal with you

If you'd like company for the practice run — to make sure the station, the cords, and the plan all play nicely together — that's just the sort of visit I love. Call or text (330) 200-8042.

A special word for medical households

If someone at home relies on powered care, you deserve a plan built with extra care — and extra layers.

A power station belongs in that plan; its quiet, clean, indoor power is a genuine comfort for a CPAP, for charging device batteries, and for keeping a medical-alert base alive. But please treat it as one layer among several, never the single thing everything depends on.

Round it out: backup batteries for the device, oxygen tanks that need no power at all if oxygen is in the picture, your utility's medical-needs registry, and a clear plan for where to go if an outage outlasts your backups. Keep the supplier's and doctor's numbers right on your written plan, and talk the whole thing through with them.

! Please build more than one layer

I'm a tech helper, not a medical professional, so I'll say this plainly: for anything a person's health depends on, one battery is never enough. Layer your backups, register with the utility, and make the plan together with the device maker and the doctor. That's how you stay truly safe.

Pairing a station with a generator

For rural homes and long outages, the calmest plan of all often isn't a station or a generator — it's both, each doing what it does best.

Let the station handle the quiet indoor essentials: the phones, the internet, the lamps, a CPAP, the fridge in cycles — all silently and safely inside, day and night. It asks nothing of you but a charge, and it never fills the house with fumes.

Let the generator handle the heavy lifting: the 240-volt well pump, and the big loads a battery simply can't carry, run outdoors and well away from the house. Fire it up when you need water or serious power, then shut it down and let the quiet station carry the night. That pairing is the theme of our power-station-versus-generator guide.

! The generator stays outside, always

A generator's exhaust carries carbon monoxide, so it must run outdoors, well away from doors and windows — never in a garage or on a porch. The station is the one that's safe inside. Keep those two roles straight and you get the best of both.

Common mistakes in an outage

A few avoidable slip-ups undo an otherwise good plan. Now you'll see them coming.

- **An uncharged station.** The number-one letdown — a flat battery in the closet helps nobody. Keep it topped up.
- **No must-run list.** Deciding what matters in the dark, under stress, leads to wasted power and forgotten essentials.
- **Running heat-makers.** A space heater or hair dryer drains the whole battery fast, or won't run at all.
- **No stored water on a well.** The pump goes down with the power, and the station can't run it — so water must be put by ahead.
- **Opening the fridge too often,** letting the cold escape and food spoil sooner.

! The mistake behind most of the others

Nearly every outage regret traces back to not having a plan made on a calm day. Ten quiet minutes ahead of time prevents almost all of these. That's the whole reason for this guide.

Questions to ask yourself

Run through these on a calm day, and any gaps in your plan will show themselves while they're still easy to fix.

- Is my station charged right now, and do I know where it and its cords are?
- What's on my must-run list, and is it in order of importance?
- How would I recharge it if the outage lasted more than a day?
- Am I on a well — and if so, do I have water stored?
- Does anyone here depend on a medical device, and are there backups beyond the station?
- Have I ever actually practiced the plan?

★ We can answer these together

If any of these give you pause, that's normal, and it's exactly what I'm here for. A short chat usually closes the gaps and puts your mind at ease. Call or text (330) 200-8042.

Put your plan on the fridge

A plan does the most good where everyone can find it. The fridge door is the perfect home for it.

Once your one-page plan is written, tape it somewhere obvious — the fridge, the inside of a cabinet door, wherever the household looks first. In an outage, anyone can walk up and follow it, even if you're not the one home, and even by flashlight.

Add the numbers that matter right on the sheet: the power company, your medical-device supplier, a trusted neighbor or family member, and mine. When the plan and the phone numbers live in one obvious place, a stressful night has a calm, clear starting point.

✓ Where everyone can see it

The best plan in a drawer nobody remembers is no plan at all. On the fridge, in plain sight, it quietly reassures the whole house — and it's right there the moment the lights flicker.

Common Questions

The questions I hear most from folks building an outage plan around a power station, answered plainly.

Q: What's the first thing to do when the power goes out?

Stay calm and work your plan: bring out the charged station, switch on the AC side, and plug in the top of your must-run list — phones, the internet, a lamp, and any medical device. Then conserve by running loads in turns.

Q: How do I make the station last through a long outage?

Cycle your loads instead of running everything at once, keep the heat-makers off it, keep the fridge closed, and recharge as you go from the car or solar. Together those stretch a battery remarkably far.

Q: I'm on a well — can the station keep my water running?

No. Most well pumps are 240-volt with a big starting surge, and a portable station can't run one — that's a generator's job. The right move is to store drinking water ahead of time.

Q: Can I rely on it for a medical device?

Use it as one layer, not the whole plan. It's a fine comfort for a CPAP or charging device batteries, but pair it with backup batteries, oxygen tanks that need no power, and your utility's medical registry — and plan with the device maker and your doctor.

★ Still have a question?

That's what I'm here for, and there's never a silly one. Call or text me at (330) 200-8042 and I'll help you build a plan you can trust.

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 your outage game plan feel a little less daunting and a lot more doable. Keep it in a drawer with your other home papers, come back to a page whenever you need it, and don't worry about memorizing anything.

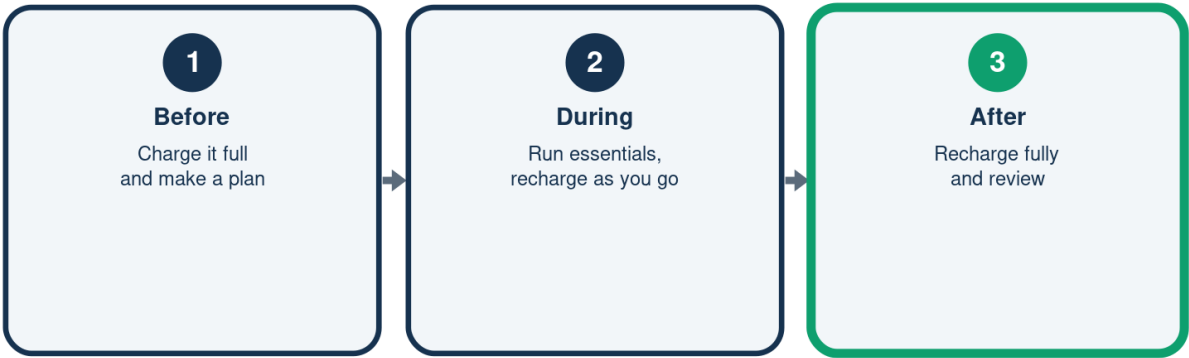
When you'd rather have a hand, that's exactly what I do. I come to your home, work at your pace, and never make you feel rushed or silly for asking. A first visit is a flat \$99, and for the parts that don't need me on-site I can often help right on your screen for \$49. Every visit comes with a 30-day,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

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

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Before, During, After

A calm plan in three parts



Prepare on a calm day, work the plan, then get ready for next time.

Your Outage Kit

What to have ready, and why

	What to have	Why it matters
Power	A power station	The heart of it
Cords	Cords and strips	Reach devices
Water	Stored water	Well pump quits
Light	A flashlight	For the dark
Calm	A written plan	Stay calm, act

A charged station, cords, water on a well, and a plan on the fridge.

Town vs. Rural Plan

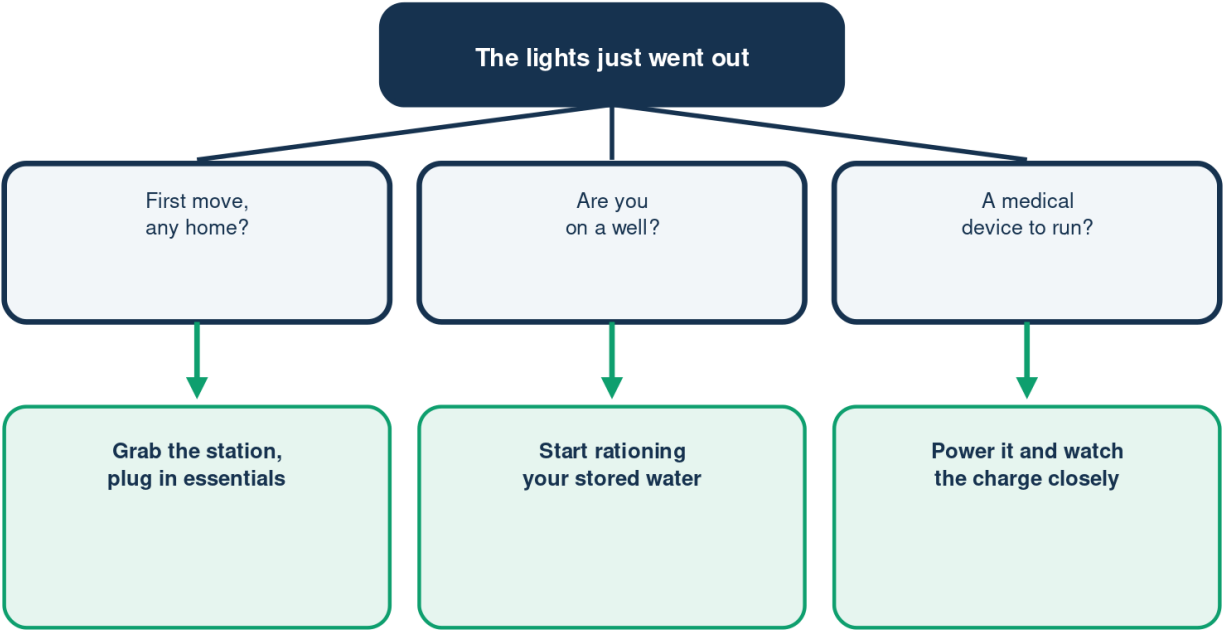
The same plan, shifted for where you live

	In town	On a well
Outage length	Often short	Can run long
Water	Keeps flowing	Pump is down
Recharge	Wall between	Solar, car
The pump	Not your worry	Needs a generator
Big loads	Skip them	Generator's job

In town, cover the essentials; on a well, store water and add a generator.

The Power Just Went Out: Now What?

Your first moves, calmly



On a well, the 240-volt pump is a generator's job, not the station's.

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



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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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