



An Extended Guide · No. 1310

Standby Power for Medical Needs

Dependable backup for the
equipment that matters

Tech Made Simple — Service Made Personal

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! Read this first — carbon monoxide is still the real danger

A standby generator runs on an engine, and engine exhaust contains carbon monoxide — an invisible, odorless gas that can kill. Your installer sets the unit outdoors and spaces it away from windows, doors, and vents to meet the maker's instructions and local code, which is a big part of what keeps you safe. Your job is to keep it that way: never let anyone box it in, build a structure around it, or let snow, leaves, or drifts pile up against it, and never move it closer to the house. Put battery-backup carbon-monoxide alarms on every floor and outside the bedrooms, and test them — the safety agencies urge this for every home. If an alarm sounds, or anyone feels dizzy, sick, or sleepy, get everyone into fresh air first and ask questions later. That matters even more here — if someone in your home leans on powered equipment to breathe or to rest easy, the fresh, clean air this rule protects is exactly what they can least afford to lose.

Let's build a calm, careful plan together

If you or someone you love depends on powered medical equipment — oxygen, a CPAP, a nebulizer, or anything else that has to be plugged in — an outage is a different kind of worry. This guide is here to turn that worry into a steady, workable plan.

I'm Bill, and I run Bill's Home Tech here in Portage County, Ohio. I want to say this plainly, right at the start: I'm a tech helper, not a doctor or a nurse, and nothing in this guide is medical advice. What I can help with is the equipment and the power behind it — and that's genuinely a big part of the puzzle.

The most important idea in this whole guide is simple: a standby generator is one strong layer of a good plan, not the entire plan. It's a wonderful layer — automatic, and running as long as it has fuel — but a careful plan never rests its whole weight on any single machine. We'll build all the layers together.

★ You're not doing this alone

This is exactly the kind of planning I love helping families with — calm, practical, and unhurried. Call or text me at (330) 200-8042 whenever you're ready 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 solid plan.

- ❑ A standby generator is one strong layer — automatic and long-running — but never the whole plan by itself.
- ❑ Keep manufacturer-approved battery backups charged and ready to go.
- ❑ If oxygen is involved, keep supplier-provided backup tanks on hand — they need no power at all.
- ❑ A small UPS bridges the few seconds between the outage and the generator taking over.
- ❑ Register with your utility's medical or priority list before you ever need it.
- ❑ Tell your equipment supplier and your doctor about your plan, and follow their guidance.
- ❑ Know the signs that mean call 911, and have somewhere else to go with power if it ever comes to that.

✓ One idea to hold onto

You don't have to solve this with one perfect machine. A few reliable layers, working together, make a far stronger plan than betting everything on any single device.

A standby is one strong layer, not the whole plan

This is the single most important idea in the guide, so we're starting with it and coming back to it often.

A standby generator has real advantages for medical needs. It starts on its own when the power fails, whether you're awake or asleep, home or out; it runs for as long as it has fuel; and it powers the whole house, not just one outlet. For steady, hands-free backup, it's hard to beat — but it's still a machine, and machines can have an off day.

- Everyday battery backups cover the very first moments and any travel.
- Supplier-provided backups — oxygen tanks, spare batteries — need no power source at all.
- The standby carries the long stretch, once the faster layers have already caught you.
- Your utility's medical-priority registration can mean extra attention when power is being restored.
- A place to go is your safety net if every layer above is ever exhausted.

★ We'll build every layer together

You don't have to figure all of this out today, or alone. Call or text me at (330) 200-8042 and we'll work through it one piece at a time.

What a standby brings to a medical plan

Within a layered plan, a standby generator earns its place for a few genuine reasons.

The biggest is that it's automatic and continuous. There's no cord to run, no pull-start in the dark, no one who has to be home and able. When the grid fails, the unit starts itself and keeps the household powered for as long as the fuel lasts — which, for equipment that runs day and night, is a real comfort.

It also delivers steady household power to the whole home at once, so a concentrator, a CPAP, a medication refrigerator, and the lights to see by are all covered together. For especially sensitive devices, a small UPS in front of the equipment adds an extra measure of steadiness — more on that next.

✓ Ask your supplier what your device needs

Some equipment manuals note a preference about power quality or a backup battery. When in doubt, a quick call to your equipment supplier beats guessing — and I'm glad to help you make sure the power side is set up the way they recommend.

A UPS: the bridge while the generator starts

For equipment that can't tolerate even a few seconds without power, this small device matters a great deal.

A UPS — an uninterruptible power supply — is a small battery unit that sits between the wall (or the generator) and your equipment. The instant the power cuts out, it takes over with no gap at all, carrying the equipment through the handful of seconds it takes the standby to start and settle in. It can also smooth over brief flickers along the way.

✓ Ask whether your equipment needs one

Not every device needs a UPS in front of it, but for anything where even a short gap matters, it's worth asking your equipment supplier or reading the manual. Setting up and testing that bridge is exactly the kind of thing I can help with.

The battery backups you still keep

Even with a standby in place, the everyday battery layer stays — because there's nothing to start up, and it's already there the instant you need it.

Many medical devices have a manufacturer-approved battery backup option, and some can run from a car adapter for a while. These cover the first moments and any time you're away from the house, so they're worth keeping ready no matter how good your generator is.

- Keep any battery backup charged as a standing habit, not just when a storm is coming.
- Know roughly how long it lasts on a full charge — ask your supplier if the manual doesn't say plainly.
- If a car adapter is an option, confirm with the maker that it's an approved way to power the device before you rely on it.

✓ Little habits, checked often

A charged backup does no good if it quietly drained months ago and nobody noticed. Fold a quick check into a routine you already have, like paying bills or watering the plants.

For oxygen users: backup tanks are your anchor

If oxygen is part of your life, this is the layer worth leaning on hardest, standby or not.

A powered oxygen concentrator is wonderful equipment, but it is, by definition, powered — so an outage takes it offline unless something steps in. Backup tanks from your oxygen supplier need no electricity at all, which makes them the steadiest layer in your entire plan, working even in the rare moment when no machine is running.

- Ask your supplier how many backup tanks they recommend you keep on hand, and keep that number current.
- Know your prescribed settings, or keep them written where you'll find them in a hurry.
- Ask your supplier to show you how to switch to a tank calmly, before you ever need to under stress.
- Check tank gauges now and then, the same way you'd check a fuel gauge.

★ I help with the power side, not the medical side

I'm glad to make sure your concentrator has reliable backup power for the extra layer — but how many tanks you need and what your settings should be are always your supplier's and your doctor's call, never mine.

Register with your utility's medical priority list

A short phone call now, well worth having made before you ever need it.

Many utilities keep a list of customers with medical equipment or other critical needs at home — sometimes called a medical-priority or critical-care list. Being on it doesn't guarantee anything specific, but it's a simple, free step that puts your household on their radar, often meaning advance notice of planned outages and a flag for restoration crews.

✓ Call and ask

Your utility's customer service line can tell you exactly what their program involves and what they need from you — usually just a form, sometimes with your doctor's confirmation. It costs you a phone call, and it's worth making today rather than someday.

Loop in your doctor and equipment supplier

They know your specific equipment and your specific health far better than any guide ever could.

Tell your doctor and your equipment supplier that you're building an outage plan, and ask for their guidance — how many backup tanks or batteries they recommend, whether anything should change on backup power, and what warning signs matter most for your situation. It isn't a one-time conversation; bring it up again if your equipment or your health changes.

★ Where my help stops, on purpose

I help with the equipment's power — the standby, the UPS, the safe hookup, and testing it all together. I never weigh in on settings, doses, or anything medical. That's always your doctor's and your supplier's call, and it should be.

Two kinds of homes, two sets of needs

Where you live shapes how quickly you can lean on each layer of your plan — and how much runway you'll want before you need it.

If you live in town or the suburbs

In town or a close-in suburb, help tends to be closer: a supplier, a pharmacy, or a hospital is often a short drive, and outages tend to run shorter too. A standby still adds real, hands-free peace of mind, especially overnight and when no one able to react is home.

- Relocating to a relative's home, a hospital, or a shelter is usually a quick trip if it ever comes to that.
- Shorter, more predictable outages mean your battery layers may cover more of the gap on their own.
- Your equipment supplier is often close by for a quick tank exchange or battery swap.
- A standby quietly covers the nights and the times you're away, so no one has to spring into action.

If you are out in the country on a well

Out in the country, that same drive can be much longer, and outages often run longer too — which makes the standby and the earlier layers carry more of the weight. A well also means no running water without power, worth remembering alongside the medical equipment.

- Plan for a longer stretch before you could realistically relocate or reach your supplier.
- A standby's long, hands-free runtime is especially valuable where outages last — our sizing guide helps you plan the fuel and load.
- A well means water stops without power too — keep some drinking water on hand for hygiene around equipment care.
- Keep extra spare batteries and backup tanks on hand, since a supply run is a bigger undertaking than it is in town.

★ Let's talk through your specific setup

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

Know when to call 911

This page exists so you never have to wonder, in the moment, whether it's serious enough to call. A standby and its backups buy time — they don't replace emergency help.

If equipment fails and your backups are running low, or if someone is having trouble breathing, has chest pain, seems confused, or has bluish lips or skin — call 911. Don't wait to see if it passes, and don't feel you need to be certain first. That is exactly what 911 is there for, and no generator or backup plan changes that.

! When in doubt, call — the layers buy time, not certainty

You will never be faulted for calling 911 and having it turn out less serious than it seemed. You may deeply regret waiting when it wasn't. Your backup layers are there to keep equipment running and buy calm minutes — if a person is in trouble, call for help first and sort out the equipment after.

Having a place to go

Sometimes the safest plan is leaving, not staying to troubleshoot — and it helps enormously to have decided that in advance.

Think through, ahead of time, where you'd go if power and every backup ran low at once — a relative's home, a hospital, or a designated shelter. Knowing the destination and roughly how you'd get there turns a frightening decision into one you've already made, long before the pressure of the moment.

- Keep a small bag ready with chargers, spare batteries, medication, and your written plan.
- Share the plan with whoever you'd go to, so it isn't a surprise for them either.
- If you'd need help getting there, decide now who you would call.

✓ Having the plan is what brings the calm

Most families tell me that simply having this decided in advance — even if they never end up using it — takes a real weight off their minds.

Building your household's written plan

A plan that lives only in your head is hard to hand to someone else in a hurry.

- ❑ A list of every device that needs power, and how each one is backed up.
- ❑ The settings your doctor prescribed, written down plainly.
- ❑ Phone numbers for your equipment supplier, your doctor, and your utility.
- ❑ Where backup tanks, spare batteries, and chargers are kept.
- ❑ Simple steps for what the standby does automatically, and how to connect equipment to it if needed.
- ❑ Where you'd go, and how you'd get there, if you needed to relocate.

★ I'll help you put it on paper

On a visit, I can help you turn this into a simple written plan — clear enough that a neighbor or a family member could follow it too, not just you. Call (330) 200-8042.

Peace of mind for family, too

A standby can quietly keep an eye on things, which is a real comfort when loved ones live apart.

Most modern standby units offer phone alerts — a note when they've started, lost utility power, or need attention. For an adult child watching over a parent's home from a distance, that quiet 'all's well' most days, and a heads-up on the rare day something's off, can ease a great deal of worry.

The alerts can often reach more than one person, so a family can share the watching. Our monitoring guide explains how it all works, and setting up the app and alerts is exactly the kind of thing I'm glad to help with on a visit.

✓ Shared watching, shared calm

When the whole family can see that the power — and the equipment — is covered, everyone rests a little easier, wherever they happen to be.

Testing the whole plan before you need it

A plan you've practiced is a plan you can trust when it actually matters.

Pick a calm day and walk through it for real: let the standby run the equipment briefly with everyone comfortable and nothing urgent happening, check that the UPS bridges the startup gap the way it should, and confirm the spare batteries and tanks are ready. Small gaps show up in a relaxed practice run, not in the middle of an actual outage.

★ Let's test it together

I'm glad to be there for this — setting it up, running through it with you, and fixing anything that doesn't work quite right before it matters. Call or text (330) 200-8042 to schedule a visit.

What I help with — and what I don't

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

Bill helps with	Always your doctor or supplier's call
Sizing and setting up a standby generator	Your prescribed settings
Setting up and testing a UPS or battery bridge	Oxygen flow rates or CPAP pressures
Coordinating a licensed electrician for a safe hookup	Medical guidance of any kind
Testing the whole plan with you on a visit	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 medical, always call your doctor or your equipment supplier first.

A few gentle reminders

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

- Treating the standby as the whole plan, without the tanks and batteries behind it.
- Letting a spare battery or backup tank sit unchecked for months at a time.
- Never having watched the standby handle the equipment, so the first real test happens during a real outage.
- Not mentioning the plan to your equipment supplier or doctor, who might otherwise catch a gap.
- Putting off the utility's medical-priority registration because it feels like paperwork for another day.

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

Noticing a gap is the whole point of this page. Pick one thing to shore up this week, and your plan gets stronger from here.

A caring checklist

Work through this at whatever pace feels right — there's no deadline except the one you set for yourself.

- ☐ I have a manufacturer-approved battery backup or car adapter, charged and ready.
- ☐ If oxygen is involved, I have supplier backup tanks and know how to switch to them.
- ☐ I have spare batteries charged and rotated, if my equipment uses them.
- ☐ I have, or am planning for, a standby generator sized for my needs.
- ☐ I have a UPS to bridge the few seconds while the standby starts.
- ☐ I'm registered with my utility's medical or priority list.
- ☐ My doctor and equipment supplier both know my outage plan.
- ☐ I know the signs that mean call 911, and I have somewhere to go if I need to leave.
- ☐ We've actually practiced this plan, not just written it down.

★ Even three checked boxes is progress

You don't have to complete this list today. Every box you check is a real layer of protection added to your plan.

Questions worth bringing to the pros in your life

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

Q: What should I ask my equipment supplier?

How many backup tanks or spare batteries they recommend, how to switch to backup calmly, and whether your device needs a UPS in front of it for those first seconds.

Q: What should I ask my doctor?

Whether anything should change on backup power, what warning signs matter most for your specific situation, and when they want you to call 911 versus their office.

Q: What should I ask an electrician about a safe hookup?

How reliably the standby will start and hold power for sensitive equipment, and how the whole system gets tested before you rely on it.

Q: What should I ask my utility?

How their medical-priority or critical-care registration works, what they need from you, and what it does and doesn't guarantee.

✓ I'm glad to help you prepare the questions

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

Common Questions

The questions families ask me most often about this, answered as honestly and warmly as I can.

Q: Is a standby generator enough on its own if someone depends on oxygen or a ventilator?

No, and please don't rely on it alone. Backup tanks or batteries that need no power at all, plus a tested plan, matter just as much as the standby itself. It's one strong layer among several.

Q: Does a standby give clean enough power for sensitive equipment?

It delivers steady household power automatically. For especially sensitive devices, a UPS in front of the equipment adds steadiness and bridges the startup gap. Check the manual or ask your supplier what your device needs.

Q: We don't have a standby yet — should we wait to build the rest of the plan?

Not at all. Battery backups, supplier tanks, the utility registration, and the written plan all matter on their own and can be started today, with the standby added when you're ready.

Q: Can you tell me what oxygen setting or CPAP pressure to use on backup power?

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

Q: How quickly does a standby come on — fast enough for medical equipment?

Usually within seconds, after a brief warm-up. For equipment that can't tolerate even that gap, a UPS carries it through until the generator takes over. Ask your supplier whether your device needs one.

★ 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.

Bringing it all together

A standby generator is a genuinely valuable piece of a medical-equipment plan — as one strong layer among several, not the whole answer by itself.

Battery backups cover the first moments. Supplier tanks and spare batteries need no power at all. A UPS bridges the few seconds before the standby starts, and the standby then carries the long stretch, automatically, for as long as it has fuel. Your utility's priority list and a clear plan with your doctor and supplier round out the paperwork — and a place to go is there if you ever need it.

Our sizing guide helps you plan the unit and its fuel, our monitoring guide covers the alerts that keep family in the loop, and our storm-readiness guide pulls the whole household's outage plan together into one calm picture.

★ 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 it at whatever pace feels right for your family.

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 backing up medical equipment 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 the licensed electrical or gas work myself — for that I'll help you line up 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 Layers of a Careful Plan

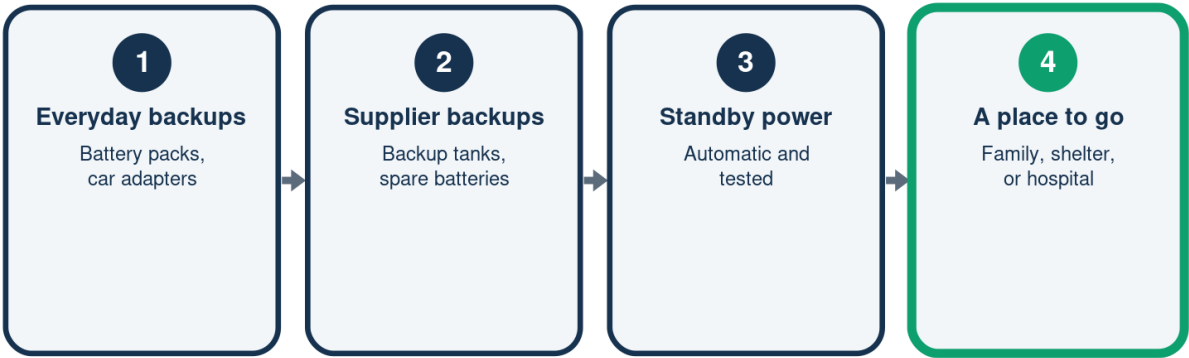
No single layer has to do the whole job

	What it covers	Who to loop in
Battery backup	Short gaps, travel	Your supplier
Oxygen backup tanks	No power needed	Oxygen supplier
Standby plus a UPS	Longer outages	Bill, electrician
Utility priority list	Faster attention	Your utility

No single layer has to do the whole job alone.

Building Your Backup Plan, Layer by Layer

Calm and complete, one layer at a time



Each layer covers for the one before it.

Standby Alone vs. a Layered Plan

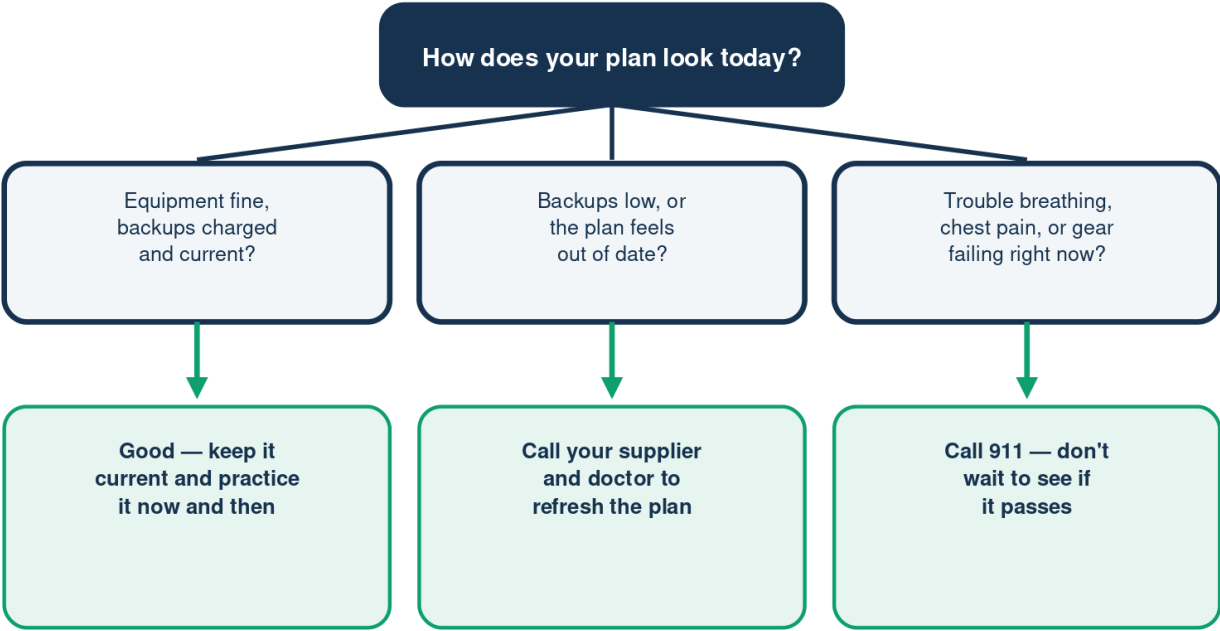
Why the other layers still matter

	Standby only	A layered plan
The startup gap	A few seconds	A UPS bridges it
If the unit hiccups	No cover	Batteries cover
Oxygen, power out	Needs power	Tanks need none
Peace of mind	Good	Best

Layers cover each other — a standby is one strong piece.

Checking In on Your Backup Plan

A calm gut-check on where your plan stands



This guide is not medical advice — always follow your doctor and equipment supplier.

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



Need a Real Person?

You do not have to remember all of it.
You just have to remember you can call.
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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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