



**American
Red Cross**

Serving King & Kitsap Counties

Tips on Alternative Power Sources

- It is important to know what your power needs are.
- Investigate if there are battery powered versions of your equipment.
- For all medical equipment requiring electrical power such as beds, breathing equipment, or infusion pumps, check with our medical supply company and get information regarding a back-up power source, such as a battery or generator.
- Puget Sound Energy has a list that people can call to get on that allows people to be warned before a planned outage, it does not provide faster service for a non-planned outage, in those cases their recommendation is to go to the hospital.

Alternative sources of heat:

- Blankets
- Emergency Blankets-can be purchased with first aid supplies
- Single Use Hand Warmers
- Wood stoves

Alternative sources of refrigeration:

- Cooler with ice or chemical ice packs
- Refrigerators at Emergency Shelters
- Portable Refrigerator-from \$400 + ('gadget' type is available for about \$60)

Alternative sources of electricity (from least expensive to most):

Free

- Emergency Shelters
- Hospital
- Libraries, if open.

From \$30

- Automobile Battery Adapter

Approximately \$50

- Inverter and Car Battery

From \$50

- Uninterruptible Power Supply—Check these carefully, some are only designed to run for around 7 minutes (giving you time to shut down your computer)

About \$75

- Portable Rechargeable Power Source

From \$100

- Inverter + Deep Cycle Battery

From \$500

- Generator

Above \$2000

- Solar (Photovoltaic)

For More Information on Generators:

Visit using a Generator when Disaster Strikes at:www.prepare.org/basic/generators.htm

TIPS FOR PEOPLE WITH LIFE-SUPPORT SYSTEMS

The information below was adapted from the Independent Living Resource Center San Francisco and the The American Red Cross.

Secure Equipment

- Secure your life-support equipment to prevent damage from falling. If you use a chain, make sure it is welded (not bent).

Alternate Providers

- Determine which facilities/providers can serve you if your home system becomes inoperable or your current provider is unable to assist you.

Alternate Power

- Ask your vendor about alternative power sources that will sustain you for up to 7 days.
- Could you use manually-operated equipment?
- Can your equipment be powered from a vehicle battery? If yes, obtain any hardware necessary for the hook-up.

Generators

- For all-day use over several days, a gasoline-powered **generator** is the preferred alternative power source. Test it periodically and operate it only in an open area to ensure good ventilation. If you store an adequate gasoline supply, make sure you do so safely. Keep a siphon kit on hand in case you need to obtain gasoline directly from your car.
- Some generators can be plugged into house wiring systems. **Talk with your utility company before you do this.**

Oxygen Users

- Ask your provider if a reduced-flow rate may be used during a disaster to prolong the life of the system. Write the reduced flow numbers on your equipment so you can refer to them.

- Be aware of oxygen safety; avoid areas where gas leaks or open flames may be present.
- Post "Oxygen in Use" signs.
- Keep the shut-off switch for oxygen equipment near you so you can get to it quickly.

Test Backups Regularly

- If your backup power system relies on batteries, be aware that stored batteries require periodic charging, even if they are unused. A charging routine must be strictly followed.
- Test your alternative power equipment regularly to ensure it will function in an emergency.
- Know the working duration of any batteries that support your system.
- Ask your power company about the type of backup power you plan to use and get their advice.

Utility Company Registry

- Many utility companies keep a list of names of people dependent on life-support systems and tag their meters. Registering for this service may qualify you for a discount rate; contact the customer service department for more information. **Never count on your power being quickly restored.** Utility personnel may not be able to reach you right away after a major disaster.

Personal Support Network

- Show your **personal support network** how to operate and safely move your equipment if necessary.
- Label equipment and attach instruction cards (lamine them for added durability).

Checklist

- _____ Secure all vital equipment.
- _____ Maintain a current list of alternate providers.
- _____ Obtain an alternate power source, such as a generator.
- _____ Know how to use your oxygen safely in an emergency.
- _____ Regularly test your backup power supply.
- _____ Register with your utility company.
- _____ Teach your support network how to operate and move your equipment.

You can order free disaster education resources as well as get disaster education presentation for your school, organization, or community from the American Red Cross, Serving King and Kitsap Counties at www.seattleredcross.org, (206) 323-2345.