



What You Need to Know About Backup Power

August 2020

Power outages can happen at any time

NOTE: In response to the novel coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic, we are coordinating with the California Office of Emergency Services (Cal OES), the California Hospital Association, the Hospital Council and directly with hospitals to identify COVID-19-critical hospitals and other essential treatment facilities. This is to assure that they can continue operating effectively during a Public Safety Power Shutoff (PSPS) event.

We want our customers to know we may need to turn off power during severe weather for public safety to prevent major wildfires so they can take steps to prepare and secure backup power if possible.

Backup power can operate as a stand-alone power source, though some solutions require a connection to our electric grid. Backup power is typically fueled by solar and either storage, battery, natural gas, gasoline, propane or diesel fuel.

Portable power stations

Portable power stations and battery technology can power anything from phones to refrigerators and more. Solutions typically function indoors and outside, without the noise, fumes, greenhouse gas emissions, air pollutants or maintenance of a traditional gasoline-powered generator. For more information, visit PG&E's Marketplace at marketplace.pge.com/portable-power-stations.

Alternative backup power solutions

One environmentally friendly and reliable energy option is to pair a solar energy system with a battery. PG&E provides financial incentives for business and residential customers installing new qualifying equipment to provide backup power through the Self-Generation Incentive Program (SGIP). The SGIP enables customers to extend electrical power during a PSPS event by adding battery storage to their wildfire safety plan. It also offers qualifying customers with medical needs support to cover up to 100% of battery and installation costs based on income, location, medical needs and experience of past PSPS events. For more information or to apply for SGIP incentives, visit pge.com/sgip. The SGIP Handbook is also available at selfgenca.com/home/resources.

Determining if backup power is right for you

Consider these important factors when deciding whether you need backup power:



ENERGY NEEDS: Do you own electrical medical devices you need to keep functioning in the event of a loss of power? How crucial is it for you to have power during an extended outage? This is especially important for customers who are dependent on life-support equipment or have special heating or cooling needs for a medical condition.



NOISE & EMISSIONS: Are there community ordinances where you live or work that restrict or limit the decibel level allowance for outdoor equipment?



COST | Backup power can cost thousands of dollars. Take any immediate needs into consideration as you examine which option may be the best choice for you.

Choosing the right backup power solution

If you decide to purchase backup power, explore the source best for you. Consider the following:



YOUR ENERGY NEEDS

Backup power can produce enough electricity to power your phone, laptop and, in some cases, your home. Consider the critical items, appliances and equipment you would need during an outage.



SAFE INSTALLATION & OPERATION

No matter what type of backup power you have, whether small-battery operated, portable or permanent standby, always consult the owner's manual for detailed instructions and safety guidelines prior to operation.



FUEL PREFERENCES

Common fuel types include gasoline, propane, natural gas, diesel and renewable energy. Your preference may be determined by environmental concerns, accessibility, affordability and available space for secure generator storage.



ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS

Generators can be expensive, noisy and hazardous. Generators that rely on natural gas, gasoline, propane or diesel fuel produce greenhouse gas emissions and could introduce harmful pollutants into the air.



Please be aware your generator could be subject to air quality regulations. To find the air quality regulator serving your area or obtain more information, please visit arb.ca.gov/app/dislookup/dislookup.php.

Using backup power systems correctly and safely

Understand and follow all instructions provided by the manufacturer to be safe while operating. Never connect any backup power system to another power source, including our power lines.

Portable generator safety

- Be sure that the power needs of the device (electric load) are supported by your generator and do not exceed manufacturer specifications.
- Place generators away from potentially flammable materials like dry grass since some generators become hot while running and remain hot after they are stopped.
- Follow manufacturer instructions regarding refueling. This might include shutting down the generator and allowing it to cool before refueling.
- Generator fuels should be safely stored in well-ventilated locations and transported in approved containers.
- Position your generator where exhaust can vent safely to prevent potentially fatal carbon monoxide poisoning.
- Use appropriate sizes for extension cords. Use the American Wire Gauge chart as reference.
- Never run cords under rugs or carpets where heat can be generated or damage may go unnoticed.

Permanent-standby generator safety

Installation requires a licensed electric contractor or other qualified professional. Visit pge.com/solar for help finding a contractor.

- Ensure electricity from your generator does not flow or “backfeed” into PG&E’s power lines. To prevent backfeeding, install a “double-pole, double-throw transfer switch” when installing your permanent standby generator.
- Any additions or adjustments to your house wiring should be inspected by your city or county building department.
- Once installation is complete, call PG&E at **1-800-743-5000** to let us know about your generator. The information will help for awareness when we are working on an outage in your area.

Financing options

If you are interested in purchasing a backup power system, see below for a list of resources. Please note that PG&E does not make any endorsements or recommendations.

- **Assistive technology:** Apply for a low-interest loan for a portable battery. Visit FreedomTech Loan Program at freedomtech.org
- **Residential customers:** Buy now, pay over time. Visit Constant Energy Capital at constantenergy.com/pmps-business
- **Small and medium businesses:** Apply for loans up to \$250,000. Visit Ascentium Capital at ascentiumcapital.com/get-financing
- **Large businesses:** Apply for funding up to \$5 million. Visit Constant Energy Capital at constantenergy.com/pmps-business



Visit pge.com/backuppowers for more information.