

Island Home Medical
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Emergency Preparedness

The medical equipment that you use in your home is powered by electricity. The electrical service to your home can be interrupted due to weather or other unforeseen reasons. With proper planning and review of these instructions, you can rest assured that your medical equipment needs will be met in a timely fashion.

Important facts to remember:

- Island Home Medical, your medical equipment provider, maintains continuous availability of resources as best as it is reasonably possible.
- We are available by phone, answering service and beeper, 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.
- Our main office contact phone is **508-693-4380**. We are in the office Monday through Friday 9 AM – 5 PM. In the event we cannot answer your call please leave a message and we will return your call within 2 hours.
- If you have an immediate need, and cannot reach us at the main phone (above) call: **508-489-0236**, leave a message with your phone number, and we will be automatically paged. Our response time to pages is 30 minutes or less.
- **If you have a medical emergency, you must call 911.**
- We **monitor the weather**, and will assist you in planning for adverse weather and possible power failures. Local weather is broadcast on 92.9 FM radio, and on television channels 57 and 3.
- If you require continuous oxygen, you have a backup supply of oxygen tanks that will last 4-6 hours. ***If the power failure and/or conditions causing the power failure are anticipated to last for a longer period, contact Respiratory Home Services if we have not contacted you during the power failure.***
- Know if your residence has an emergency backup electric generator. If so, it may take up to 10 minutes for the generator to provide electricity.

Preparations prior to a power failure:

- Have your medical **equipment instructions** readily available, and near a **flashlight with 2 sets of batteries**. At or near your bedside is preferred.
- Have a **battery powered radio with 2 sets of batteries** available.
- Have any required medications and diabetic testing equipment readily available.
- **Know your instructions** for use during power failures, especially for oxygen backup tanks.
- Notify, or have a caregiver notify: Elder Services in your town, NSTAR Electric, and EMS in your town. Tell them of your medical equipment needs requiring electricity. You will be given priority attention to the best of availability, during a power failure or natural disaster.
- Contact the Dukes County Sheriff's Department, 508-627-5173 and request a street number locator sign for your property. This will speed the response time in locating your home during an emergency.

- Always have a **telephone that is NOT cordless** readily available, preferably near your bedside. **A cellular phone may work** during a power failure if its battery is charged.
- ***Cordless phones do not work during a power failure.***

What to do during a power failure/natural disaster:

- **Remain calm.** Respiratory Home Services has provided services during emergencies and hurricanes, and has internal procedures for meeting your needs.
- **If you are alone, contact a relative, friend, or caregiver,** and let them know of your situation.
- Don't forget to **take your medicines** as scheduled.
- Check your flashlight, replace batteries if necessary.
- Turn your radio on to 92.9 FM (also available is 101.9 FM) for information and possible evacuation instructions.
- If the power failure lasts longer than 4 hours, you must consider your basic needs for heat, light, cooking and safety, and any medical conditions that have certain requirements or schedules. It may be necessary to prepare to move to a shelter.
- **Shelter and emergency services during an emergency or a disaster are arranged by dialing 911.**
- If you require continuous oxygen: switch to your **backup oxygen** tank. Write down the time you turn the backup oxygen on. Contact Respiratory Home Services if we have not contacted you since the power failure. Let us know what time you began using your back up system.
- If you require the use of a nebulizer you may need to use a hand held inhaler if it has been prescribed for you. You will need to wait until power resumes, or you are in an alternate site that has electricity to use your nebulizer.
- **There is no backup provision for CPAP or BiPap.** Your physician has let you know if you may safely do without CPAP or BiPap for a certain amount of time
- If you require a change of position in a semi-electric hospital bed, have someone place 2, 9-Volt batteries in the lower motor case underneath the bed.
- **When electricity comes back** in service, turn off your backup oxygen system, write down the time you turned off the backup system and the contents remaining in the backup system, switch back to your oxygen concentrator (**check the circuit breaker** for resetting), then contact Island Home Medical, letting us know this information.

After the power failure/disaster, please contact Island Home Medical for replacement of any backup oxygen tanks. Also, please let us know if you had any concerns or difficulties with your emergency preparedness plans.