

**wellcare® information for you about**

# **Wells: What to Do When the Power Fails**

When the electric power supply is interrupted, so is the service provided by your well pump. Be prepared for a sudden power outage and its impacts on your well and home water system. For this, you will need an alternate source to supply your water.

## **Water Storage or Retention Tanks**

A bulk storage or water retention tank can be added to your well system to supply water when the power fails. The tank is usually installed next to your pneumatic water storage tank, which operates on electricity. Water flows continually through the bulk storage tank, so the water is fresh when needed.

Simple gravity allows the storage tank to operate when the power is off. A typical storage tank is made of galvanized steel, carbon steel or fiberglass. It is fitted with a cap at the top to provide air, and a valve at the bottom to drain the water.

The average family of four uses 400 gallons of water each day for all indoor purposes, from drinking to washing clothes and preparing meals. During an emergency, it is recommended to store at least one gallon per person per day for at least three days, mainly to provide water for drinking and flushing toilets manually.

Contact a licensed well contractor to discuss what options are available for additional water storage for your home water needs.

## **Alternative Power Sources**

A gas or diesel-powered electricity generator can keep your well operating in an emergency. You could buy a small portable generator, at an average cost of less than \$1,000, just to operate the submersible pump on your water tank. Or you could choose to install a full system generator to operate your well, in addition to refrigeration, heating, cooling and other systems in your home.

To determine what size generator you might need, search the internet for “sizing a generator” which provides many websites that list wattage requirements to operate household appliances and systems. For example, the submersible pump in a well system typically requires a generator with a minimum capacity of 3,500 watts. Remember, the larger the water pump, the larger the generator’s wattage must be.

A licensed well contractor can also help you decide what size generator you need and recommend a local dealer in portable and on-site generators.

If you need assistance locating a licensed well contractor in your area visit our website for our interactive map: <https://www.watersystemscouncil.org/water-well-help/water-testing-by-state/> or contact the wellcare® Hotline at 888.395.1033 or [www.wellcarehotline.org](http://www.wellcarehotline.org).

## Take Simple Precautions

If you don't have an alternate water or power source in place to cope with power failures, make advance plans to ensure a safe drinking water supply. Remember to store at least one gallon per day of fresh water for each member of our household for at least three days. Replenish these supplies every six months to keep the water fresh.

When the power comes back on, let your tap water run for a few minutes to ensure the lines are clear and only fresh water is coming through the system. If the water shows any discoloration, odor, or other signs of contamination, use an alternative source and have your water tested and treated before using it again. Floods that lead to power loss can contaminate your well. For more information on water testing and managing a flooded well, see our wellcare® information sheets on our website at <https://www.watersystemscouncil.org/water-well-help/wellcare-info-sheets/> or contact the wellcare® Hotline at 888.395.1033.

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### FOR MORE INFORMATION to help maintain and protect your water well system:



**wellcare®** is a program of the **Water Systems Council (WSC)**. **WSC** is the only national organization solely focused on protecting the health and water supply of the 43 million people nationwide who depend on household wells for their water supply.

This publication is one of more than 100 **wellcare®** information sheets available **FREE** at [www.watersystemscouncil.org](http://www.watersystemscouncil.org).

Well owners and others with questions about wells and well water can contact the **wellcare®** Hotline at 1-888-395-1033 or visit [www.wellcarehotline.org](http://www.wellcarehotline.org) to fill out a contact form or chat with us live!

### JOIN THE WELLCARE® WELL OWNERS NETWORK!

By joining the **FREE wellcare®** Well Owners Network, you will receive regular information on how to maintain your well and protect your well water.

Contact us at 1-888-395-1033 or visit [www.wellcarehotline.org](http://www.wellcarehotline.org) to join!