SHOULD I BUY A POWER STATION OR A GENERATOR?

A power station is a battery you charge beforehand, quiet and safe indoors. A generator makes power for days but must run outdoors, more than 20 feet from windows, doors and vents, because of carbon monoxide. For anything wired into the house, have a licensed electrician install it.

THE STEPS

01 Choose a power station for short outages, phones, lights, a router and some fridge hours. It is safe indoors.

02 Choose a generator for outages of days, a well pump or medical equipment.

03 Run a generator outdoors only, more than 20 feet from windows, doors and attached garages. Never in a home or garage, even with doors open (CDC, Ready.gov).

04 Install battery-backup carbon monoxide detectors on every level (Ready.gov).

05 Have a licensed electrician install a transfer switch or interlock. Never backfeed power through a wall outlet.

THE CHECKLIST

- ☐ CO alarms with battery backup
- ☐ A clear outdoor spot 20 feet from the house
- ☐ An electrician for any house connection
- ☐ Fuel stored safely outdoors

Sources: CDC, Carbon Monoxide; Ready.gov, Power Outages. Last reviewed November 17, 2026. General planning information, not medical, legal or financial advice.