

**To Breathe Or Not To Breathe?**

*Presented by Arlyss Rothman*

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Are you or someone you know on Oxygen or other life-sustaining equipment that requires electricity?  
Are you or they prepared for an emergency or disaster?

The main issues here are those who require continuous oxygen or those on Bi-Pap or supportive oxygen, often just at night (Those with neuro-muscular disease who need Oxygen supplementation to give them a rest). People who use C-Pap for sleep apnea can survive without treatment in an emergency although they may snore or not sleep well, but they can survive).

Oxygen is commonly provided today via Oxygen concentrators that are an electrical appliance that actually concentrates room or outside air to provide the prescribed concentration and flow needed by an individual. There are portable units that use battery power while away from the concentrator for a few hours. These batteries cost about \$1000.

As you may know from prior talks, we train residents to be prepared to “Shelter in place” for 3-7 days in the event of a major earthquake or other disaster. It is unlikely that an evacuation will be necessary, and may not be possible, so we may all need to survive for 3-7 days. And remember.... YO-YO “You are on your own” – because even if there are first responders available, all resources may be overwhelmed. For those on Oxygen, this presents some challenges.

Each Oxygen patient is provided with a concentrator and a back-up E-tank (about 30” tall) with tubing. This tank can provide between 1.5 hours of Oxygen flow up to 10 hours depending on the needed, prescribed rate of flow. See table E. The larger 56” tank can provide between 19 hours and 4 days 16 hours depending on use.

<b>E Tank</b>	Flow Duration Continuous	Demand Hrs	<b>H Tank</b>	Duration
1L/m	10 hrs	32	1L/m	4 days 16 hrs
2L/m	5 hrs	15	2L/m	2 days 7 hrs
3L/m	3.6 hrs	10	3L/m	1 day 12 hrs
4L/m	2.5 hrs	8	4L/m	1 day 4 hours
5L/m	2.0 hrs	6	5L/m	23 hrs
6L/m	1.5 hrs	5	6L/m	19 hrs
	30”, 12.4 lbs			56”, 150 lbs

It is critical for Oxygen users to develop a plan for electrical outage with their Oxygen supplier and their care provider. Please discuss this with any residents or others who require Oxygen. They may need to store many E tanks to survive multiple days of outage.