

What to expect during a power outage with FTTH service

Fiber to the home service works differently than traditional copper pair telephone service. With traditional telephone service very small amounts of electrical current was carried over a copper circuit to power the telephone in your home. Since the new signal is entirely optical and can carry no appreciable power, the electronics attached to your home must be locally powered. What this means in practically every case is that a battery backup unit has been installed inside your home. This unit is plugged into 110V AC commercial power, and has a set of low power leads that feed the electronics outside. The unit is designed to provide approximately 8 hours of backup telephone service during a commercial power outage. To keep the battery in optimum condition, it is important that the battery backup unit be plugged into an outlet that is always live (does not turn off with a switch). To verify your battery backup unit is plugged in and charging, you should see a green 'AC' light on the front of the unit.

To help ensure that we can provide telephone service during a power outage for the longest period possible, the electronics on the side of the house sense the presence of commercial power at your home or business. In the event of a power outage, they enter an economy mode and shut down all customer facing data ports. What this means for most subscribers is that Internet and television service are disrupted. Normally in a power outage this is acceptable, as your televisions, computers, and wireless routers are no longer powered up and functioning, and most people won't notice the disruption. Telephone service is provided throughout the outage, up to approximately 8 hours.

There are a few things to keep in mind to ensure you have telephone service during power outages. First, feature phones (phones that require commercial power to operate) will no longer be functional due to the power outage. This includes practically all cordless phones on the market. The handset will still likely power up, but since the commercial power is out at the base unit, no calls will be passed. The best way to keep telephone service during an outage is to keep at least one plain old telephone in your home in a convenient location. Phones like this can be purchased at many retailers for a reasonable cost. It should just be a simple telephone, with only a telephone cord. No commercial power cord should be present.

For those customers that have back up power at their homes or businesses, Internet and television services can be maintained through the power outage. The only requirement is that the battery back up unit installed in your premise be plugged into an outlet that is served by the backup generator. In this scenario the battery backup unit and fiber terminal are not even aware that there is a power outage, and continue to operate normally.

While this document covers most common scenarios, it might not cover all. If you have specific concerns that are not covered here, please feel free to call the business office at 712-778-2121 and we will be glad to discuss your specific scenario.