



## **EMERGENCY ALERTS (Push Notifications)**

- Apps
  - PulsePoint.org
  - Cal Fire's "Ready for Wildfire"
- Twitter
  - @TCEP90290
  - @LACoFDPIO
  - Local news channels
- Alert.lacounty.gov (landline, digital-VOiP, mobile voice/text, email)
- Text your zip code to 888777

## **INCIDENT UPDATES**

- [tcep.org/EmergencyStatus](http://tcep.org/EmergencyStatus)
- TCEP HOTLINE: 310-455-3000
- @TCEP90290 (Twitter)
- TCEP FRS Top of the Hour (Ch 15 — only in major incidents when TCEP is in full activation conditions)
- Broadcastify.com — Listen to LA County Fire Blue 3
- AM news radio (KNX 1070)
- Ham radio



## PulsePoint for LA County Fire Incidents

- Download the free app from your app store, then launch the app.
- Tap the button with three lines in the upper left corner of the Home screen.
- Tap **Agencies**.
- Type 90290 in the Search field, then tap the result, **Topanga**.
- You should see Los Angeles County FD (Division 7) on the next screen. Tap the **Follow** button in the upper right corner.
- Tap the back arrow in the upper left to get back to Settings. Tap **Settings**. You should see LA County FD (Div 7) with a check mark at top.
- Scroll down to Notifications. Tap the check box next to **Confirmed Structure Fire** and **Confirmed Vegetation Fire**.
- Tap any additional incident types you want to be notified of. Note, if you check too many, you will hear the PulsePoint notification sound go off a LOT!
- Tap the button with three lines in upper left corner and then tap **Home**.
- When a fire starts, you will get a notification. Tap the notification to open PulsePoint. Tap the incident in the list to open a map showing the location. Tap the back arrow in upper left corner to go back to the main incident listing.
- If you want to listen to fire dispatch radio, tap the orange tab with three lines at the bottom, then toggle the sound icon on or off.





## Get TCEP Tweets Pushed to Your Phone as SMS Text Messages

The only way to get TCEP notifications and incident updates pushed to your phone is through Twitter. Follow the instructions below. Once you've set these preferences, you never have to actually use Twitter for anything other than getting TCEP notifications. Think of it as another part of your emergency kit. Consider also following @LACoFD\_DivVII (LA County Fire Division 7) and @LACoFDPIO (LA County Fire Public Information Officer). Once you receive a tweet about an incident, go to [tcep.org/emergencystatus](https://tcep.org/emergencystatus) for more details.

1. Download the Twitter app. If you don't have a Twitter account, create one.
2. Log in to your Twitter account and search for **TCEP90290**. Once on TCEP's profile page, tap the **Follow** button.
3. Tap the **bell icon** to the left of the **Follow** button. Tap **All Tweets**.
4. Navigate back to your own profile page (tap your **profile icon** or the three lines depending on your device OS).
5. Tap **Settings and privacy** then tap **Notifications**. Under Preferences, tap **Push notifications**.
6. Tap **Tweets**.
7. Go to your phone settings and select how you want notifications from Twitter to be displayed.

The above settings will push ALL TCEP tweets to your phone. TCEP respects your privacy and limits tweets during calm conditions.





## Add TCEP's Emergency Status Page to your phone's home screen

### iPhone/iPad

- Launch the Safari browser (you can't do this with other browsers such as Chrome or Firefox) and navigate to [t-cep.org/emergencystatus](http://t-cep.org/emergencystatus)
- Tap the Share button (rectangle with an arrow pointing up).
- Tap **Add to Home Screen** (grey square with a plus sign inside).
- Type a short name for the icon in the top text box area, such as **TCEP ESP**.
- Tap **ADD**.

### Android:

- Launch the Chrome browser and navigate to [t-cep.org/emergencystatus](http://t-cep.org/emergencystatus)
- Tap the three vertical dots at top right of address bar.
- Select **Add to Home screen**.
- Give your icon a short name, such as **TCEP ESP**.
- Tap **ADD**.





## **What Can FRS (Family Radio Service) Radios Do for You?**

FRS radios allow Topanga residents to receive information during an emergency.

FRS radios can receive information in Topanga when the power is out and cell towers are not working.

TCEP's "Top of the Hour Report" provides critical information during an emergency.

This information may include evacuations alerts, road closures, school notices, and Red Cross shelter locations.

**Listen for the "Top of the Hour Report" on Channel 15 when TCEP is activated during an emergency.**

Have LOTS of extra batteries charged and ready.

Privacy codes or sub-channels should be set to none or "0".

FRS radios operate on "line of sight" from one radio to another.

Move around to find the best reception.

## **How To Use FRS Radios with Topanga's Neighborhood Networks (NN)**

A Neighborhood Network (NN) is a group of neighbors who organize to help each other during emergencies.

Stay in touch with the Neighborhood Network (NN) for your area.

Use your NN's assigned FRS channel to talk to your neighbors.

Please remember only one person can talk at a time.

Each NN should identify a NN Radio Contact to act as the local radio lead for your area.

Please request permission to talk from your NN Radio Contact in order to allow for orderly communication.

Let your NN Radio Contact direct the radio transmissions in an orderly manner.

15 minutes after each hour (or shortly thereafter), your NN Radio Contact should re-transmit (repeat word for word) all information received during TCEP's "Top of the Hour Report" for those who could not hear the message directly.

Be prepared.

Practice BEFORE there is an emergency.

## **Topanga Survival Guide**

<https://topangasurvival.wordpress.com/survival-guide/>

**Know your Zone (1 – 9), look in the Topanga Survival Guide - Section 7 (Page 85).**

**Know your NN's assigned FRS channel (8–14), look in the Topanga Survival Guide - Section 7 (Page 96).**

**Stay in Touch and Stay Safe**

## What are FRS (Family Radio Service) Radios?

- FRS radios are not a substitute for calling 911 about life or property threatening emergencies.
- FRS radios are very affordable and easy to operate.  
They are usually sold in pairs for less than \$50 (\$25 each).
- Don't buy a radio based on the mileage (distance).  
Those ratings can be misleading.
- Get an FRS radio that can use common batteries like "AA" or "AAA" (alkaline or rechargeable).  
If it only accepts a special battery pack, how will you recharge that battery pack when the power is out?
- The distance an FRS radio can communicate is based on "Line of Sight".  
Examples:  
FRS radio can easily communicate from Viewridge Road (PSR 1A) to the Tuna Water Tanks (PSR 9A)  
FRS radios will NOT be able to communicate from Mill Creek Ranch to Topanga Community House  
Henry Ridge would block signals between Mill Creek Ranch (PSR 2A) and Community House (PSR 4A)
- Set to your privacy code to off or to zero (0).  
Privacy codes or sub-channels will keep you from hearing others' transmissions.  
Privacy codes or sub-channels must NOT be used during an emergency.
- No license is needed to receive (listen) on channels 15 – 22, but an FCC license is required to transmit.
- Neighbors can keep each other informed, in many cases without leaving home or tying up the phone.  
Think of it as an old fashioned party line.
- Please do not transmit while someone else is talking!  
Multiple transmissions cancel each other out.
- FRS Radios can provide access to current and correct information, which may be key to your safety.
- If someone transmits a message directly to you, repeat what was said to confirm that you heard it correctly.

### Samples of FRS radios





# Topanga Unplugged

## How to stay informed and connected during a power outage

The majority of communications systems we all rely on (Internet, TV, digital & cell phone) require electricity. When the power goes out, many of Topanga's connections to the world go out as well. This includes telecom providers Frontier and Spectrum, plus DirecTV and all cell phone carriers. Old-style copper telephone lines receive power from the service provider. They should continue to operate during a power outage, providing the phone lines are still up. They still exist here and there, but are the exception as service providers have been phasing them out.

We all experienced the frustration of being "unplugged" in the early hours of the Woolsey Fire on 9 November 2018 when all of Topanga lost power. Most residents were immediately shut off from emergency notifications and fire updates, including the order to evacuate the canyon. The deadly 2017 and 2018 fires in Northern California showed, with tragic results, what can happen when residents fail to get timely notifications of a fast moving wildfire.

It's strongly suggested that individuals include, in their emergency planning, multiple ways to get emergency information during a power outage. TCEP's Disaster Radio Team volunteers have come up with some suggestions. As you do your own research to find the solutions that work best for you, please keep these points in mind:

- This is not an exhaustive list of possible solutions.
- There are no guarantees any of these solutions will work for your specific installation or in any specific disaster scenario.
- Telecom equipment comes in many different configurations—even from the same provider—so solutions may have to be adapted for your particular set-up.
- Cost ranges are rough estimates only. Your mileage may vary.
- TCEP does not recommend or endorse any specific products or brands. TCEP does not endorse or vouch for the website(s) linked below.

## Emergency Notification Options

### AM/FM Battery-Powered Radio

"Free" – \$80+

*Use: Listen to city-wide local news*

- Many Topanga residents heard about the Woolsey evacuation orders from a portable AM radio tuned to KNX 1070.
- Do a web search for "Emergency radios" to find brands with multiple power sources, including hand-crank charging systems.
- Your car likely has a radio (that's the "free" one).
- Preset these AM news stations: KNX 1070; KFI 640; KABC 790; KRLA 870

## FRS Radios

\$20 – \$50

**Use: Listen to TCEP Top-Of-The-Hour (TOTH) reports during emergencies; communicate with neighbors.**

- FRS stands for Family Radio Service. These are basic, battery-powered, “walkie-talkie” radios that can be purchased and used without a license.
- During large scale emergencies, like the Woolsey Fire, TCEP’s Disaster Radio Team transmits a 5-minute Emergency Status Announcement at the Top-Of-The Hour.
- This Emergency Status Announcement may include evacuation alerts, road closures, school notices, small and large animal evacuation information, and Red Cross shelter locations.
- **The TOTH report is moving to FRS Channel 15 on May 5, 2019.**
- On Friday November 9, as the Woolsey Fire was marching towards Malibu, residents with FRS radios learned of the Topanga evacuation order from the TOTH report.
- See page 25 of the Topanga Disaster Survival Guide ([www.topangasurvival.org](http://www.topangasurvival.org)) for more on FRS radios and TOTH reports. Also, see TCEP’s FRS Handout.

## Charging Cell Phones, Tablets, Laptops, and Radios

- Get charging cables for your car and a charging adapter if necessary.
- Have several USB charging sticks in your emergency kit, along with proper cables and connectors for all of your devices. Keep your sticks fully charged.
- Consider larger capacity battery packs with USB ports designed for phone charging that provide more power for more devices.
- Practice good phone usage during emergencies to conserve battery life.

## Back-up Power Options for Digital Phone, Internet, and Cell Phone

*4 tiered solutions based on type of service, duration, and cost*

The following solutions can provide back-up power to your telecom equipment to keep your digital phone, internet, Wi-Fi, and cell phone working. These options assume your telecom provider continues to supply service to your home. If your telecom provider experiences a communications network outage, then no amount of home back-up power will provide you with internet or phone service.

During the Woolsey Fire power outage, Spectrum experienced a network outage so all Topanga Spectrum customers lost service. Frontier kept their full service running throughout the outage so Frontier customers with full AC back-up power (see options below) for their Frontier equipment maintained full internet, Wi-Fi, digital phone, and home-internet-based cell phone service.

There is no guarantee the scenario will play out the same in the next fire or earthquake.

Topanga cell service is spotty, at best, and does not have any built-in back-up power. For more reliable cell service in your home, enable Wi-Fi calling in your cell phone preferences. As long as you maintain Internet service through a Wi-Fi router using the more powerful internet/Wi-Fi back-up solutions below, you’ll be able to use your cell phone during an outage.

## **Built-in back-up battery for Frontier/Spectrum phone service**

**\$25 – \$60**

***Use: Power for digital telephone voice service for up to 8 hours. Does NOT power Internet or TV.***

- Frontier and Spectrum offer battery back-up capabilities to keep your digital phone service functioning during an outage. (This does not apply to copper line phone service.)
- These batteries are installed either in the Frontier Optical Network Terminal (ONT) power supply or the Spectrum Multimedia Terminal Adapter (MTA) phone modem. Customers must purchase these batteries either from their telecom provider or a third party compatible brand.
- The batteries automatically keep only the phone service working in an outage. This assumes the telecom provider continues to deliver service to your home.
- You will need to use a non-powered, corded telephone to make and receive calls. These phones are readily available and should be part of your emergency kit.
- These batteries only power digital phone service. They do not provide internet or Wi-Fi service, meaning they won't keep your cell phones connected.
- Batteries degrade with age. Some systems have a status light that indicates battery conditions and/or an audible alarm (intermittent beeping) indicating your battery needs replacing. Consider replacing Frontier batteries every 3-5 years or so. Spectrum claims their batteries last 5-10 years.
- You could buy a second battery and use a trickle charger to keep it charged, giving you the ability to swap out a spent battery for additional run time.

## **Uninterruptible Power Supply (UPS)**

**\$120 - \$300**

***Use: Keep Frontier, Spectrum, and DirecTV services (phone/internet/Wi-Fi) powered for up to 6 hours.***

- A UPS is a battery with AC outlets that automatically supplies back-up power to any device that is plugged into it when the electricity grid goes down.
- Generally, a UPS is not meant to power devices for long time periods. Its main purpose is to keep sensitive electrical equipment, such as computers, running long enough after a power loss for you to save and shut down without damaging the equipment or losing data.
- Keep your Frontier ONT or Spectrum MTA and Wi-Fi router plugged into a UPS 24/7. During an outage, the whole system can continue to operate off the UPS for a limited time.
- The length of time the UPS will power the ONT / MTA and Wi-Fi router depends on the capacity of the UPS and the power requirements of whatever you've got plugged in.
- Frontier ONT / Spectrum MTA and Wi-Fi routers do not require a lot of power. A 1,000VA-1,500VA UPS may give you 3-6 hours of run time for this equipment.
- Consider getting the most powerful UPS you can afford to give yourself the longest potential run time.
- The battery in a UPS becomes less effective over time and will eventually need to be replaced.
- The batteries in some UPS can be "hot swapped" allowing you change depleted batteries with fresh charged batteries.

## 100Ah Deep Cycle Batteries + Inverters + Trickle Chargers

**\$250 – \$600+**

**Use: Keep Frontier/Spectrum/DirectTV phone and internet/Wi-Fi system powered for up to 72 hours.**

- 100Ah deep cycle batteries look much like the battery in your car, but instead of providing instant starting power, they are designed to provide steady power over time.
- This solution requires minor DIY capabilities, such as connecting an inverter and trickle charger to the 100Ah batteries.
- One battery and inverter may power your Frontier ONT / Spectrum MTA for up to 72 hours. Unless your Wi-Fi router has power too, you will only have access to digital phone service.
- A second battery and inverter may power your Wi-Fi router and Wi-Fi-based cell service for up to 72 hours.
- If the Wi-Fi router and Frontier ONT / Spectrum MTA are physically distant from one another, you will need a second battery and inverter to power your Wi-Fi router.
- As with all battery solutions, if you have a way to charge spare batteries, run times can be extended by swapping in a freshly charged battery.

## Battery Power Stations (EX: Goal Zero, Tesla Power Wall)

**\$400 – \$3,000+**

**Use: Keep your digital phone and Internet/Wi-Fi system powered for up to 3 days.**

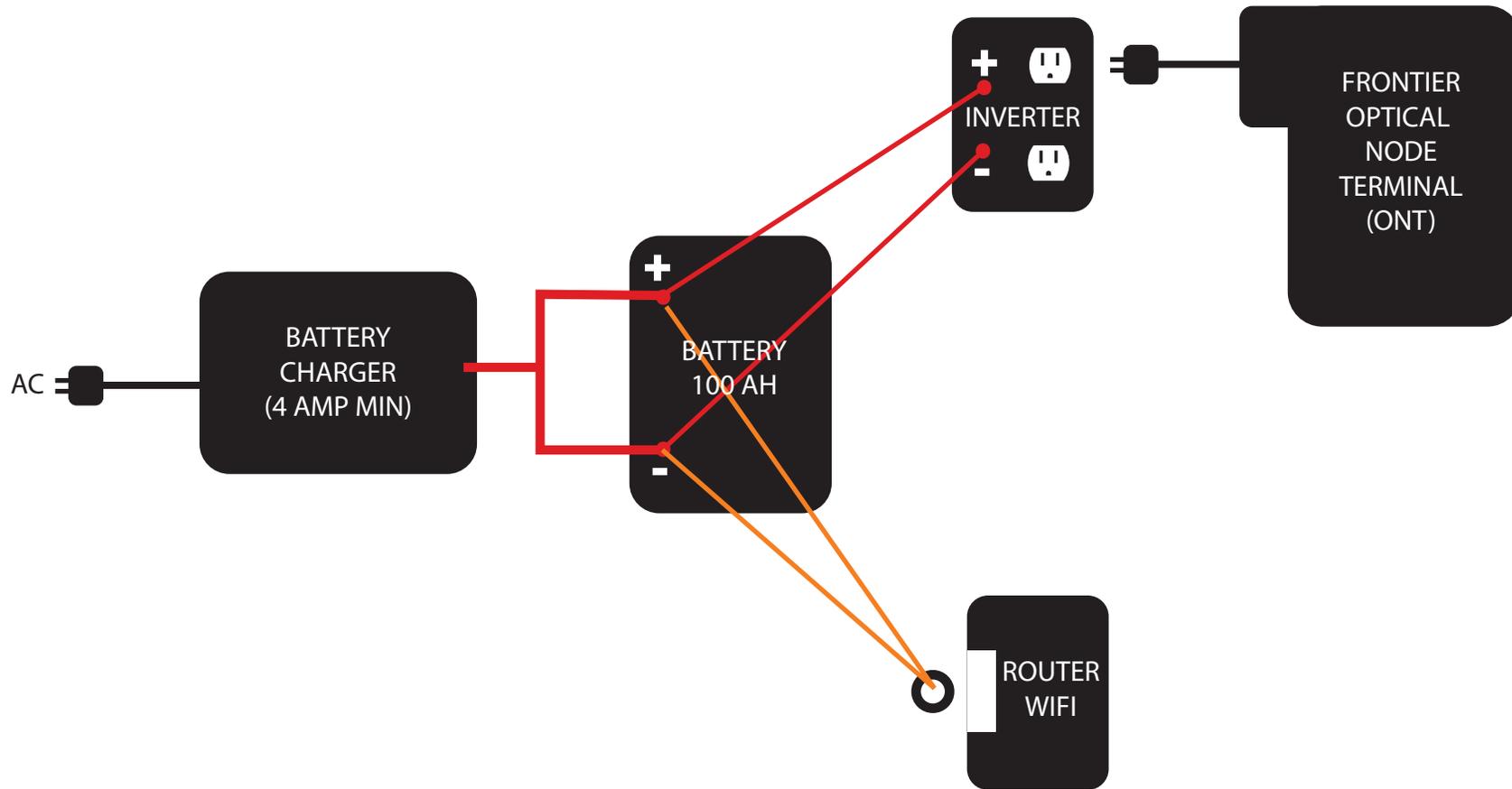
- A power station is simply a large battery (either sealed lead acid or lithium) with a built-in inverter and AC outlets for the easiest “plug and play” convenience.
- The length of time they can power telecom equipment depends on the battery capacity. The math is simple: Take the wattage capacity of your power station and divide by the combined wattage of the devices you are plugging into it to see how many hours it will run.  
EX: 1,400 watt-hour power station / 30 watt Frontier ONT + router = 46 hours (1400 ÷ 30 = 46.6).
- Many power stations can be recharged using solar panels. If your solar panels can feed in more power than your plugged in devices are pulling out, you can theoretically power your devices indefinitely.
- These units are silent, emit no fumes and can be used indoors. They are generally more expensive per watt of power than generators.
- Some can be kept charged in stand-by mode using solar panels or by keeping them plugged into a wall outlet.

## Generators

**\$500 – \$1,000+**

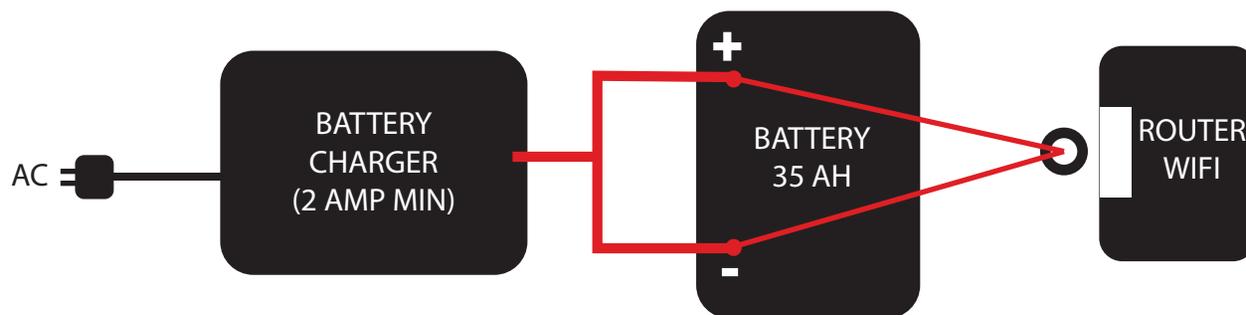
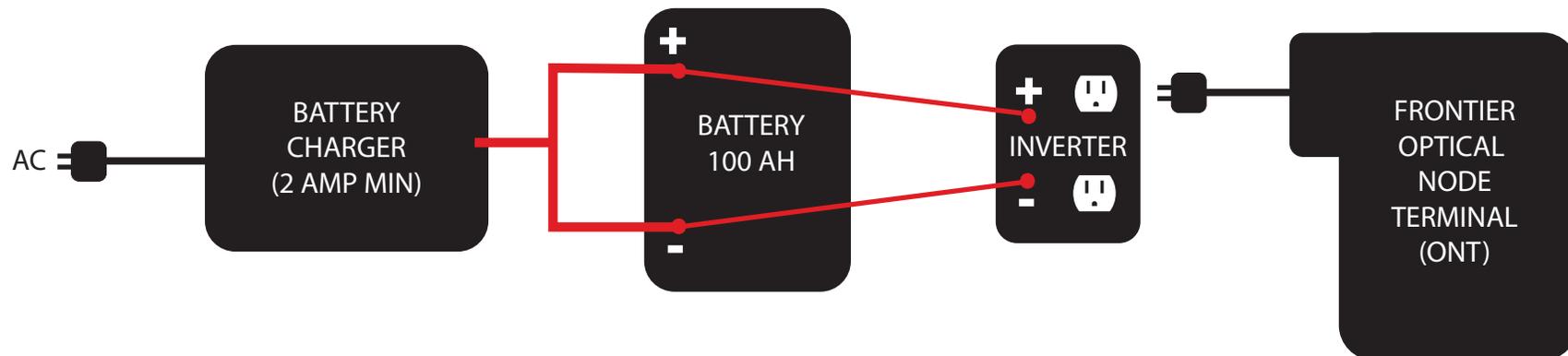
**Use: Keep digital phone and internet/Wi-Fi system plus other devices powered for up to 7+ days.**

- Generators give you the most power per dollar. They have AC outlets making it easy to directly plug in and run electrical equipment.
- You must store fuel for your generator.  
The amount of fuel you have will determine how long you can power your equipment.
- Generators are noisy and emit fumes so they must be run outdoors.
- Propane- and gasoline-powered generators each have pros and cons. See this web page for an overview:  
<https://www.americasgenerators.com/blog/post/2018/07/03/backup-fuel-propane-vs-gas-generators.aspx>



## BATTERY BACKUP 1 BATTERY SYSTEM

WHERE A WIRE CAN BE RUN FROM A SINGLE BATTERY TO BOTH ONT AND ROUTER



## BATTERY BACKUP 2 BATTERY SYSTEM

WHERE ONT AND ROUTER ARE TOO FAR APART TO RUN A WIRE FROM A SINGLE BATTERY