

## Confusion over NBN backup batteries

Recently ACCAN has heard [reports](#) of consumers having to replace their NBN backup batteries earlier than expected, sometimes while under warranty.

Prior to October 2014, it was mandatory to have a backup battery in an NBN box for services in fibre to the premises areas. It is now an optional feature.

Not all consumers need to have a backup battery. You only need to have one if other services are reliant on your connection, or if you have no alternative access to emergency services (e.g. via mobile services) when there is a power outage. These services include medical alarms and fixed-line telephones.

The recent reports suggest that many consumers are finding that their backup battery has needed replacing sooner than expected. ACCAN is concerned that poor quality batteries may cost consumers extra money if they keep needing to be replaced. The process of replacing a battery may be difficult for some consumers. We are concerned that some may require the assistance of a technician when replacing the battery which would also add to the costs.

These poor quality batteries may also put consumers at risk. Battery backup is very important for consumers who use medical alarms or need continuous phone services in the event of a power loss. Not having a battery backup, or failure of a battery, can create a potential risk to life and property for some vulnerable consumers.

## What to do when your battery expires

If you require a backup battery, when a battery expires, [nbn states](#) that you should check with your retail service provider (RSP) to check whether it will supply a replacement battery or if you'll need to purchase one yourself from a store. Information on where to buy a backup battery is available on the [nbn website](#). Those who need them are consumers who use medical alarms and those who live in areas where mobile coverage is poor.

Before replacing the battery, you should check with your telecommunications service provider whether your NBN service will be supported by the battery. Not all services will work in a power outage, even with a battery backup.

If your battery expires while still under the nbn or manufacturer's warranty (usually around 24 months) you are entitled to have the battery replaced under the Australian Consumer Law. Contact your provider or the manufacturer for more information on this.

## Recycle used batteries

You don't have to have a backup battery if you don't need one. When the battery needs replacing simply remove it from the box.

Take care disposing of the battery and be sure to recycle it. Used Sealed Lead Acid batteries are classified as hazardous waste and must be recycled by a specialist battery recycler. Do not dispose of used batteries in your household garbage or recycling. Check the [nbn website](#) for information on where to recycle your used battery.