



Senate Bill 969 Requires All Garage Door Openers Installed in California after July 1st 2019 Will Have to Have a Battery Back Up

In 2017, California had its most destructive wildfire season with widespread power outages impacting garage door operation, leaving some homeowners trapped because they were unable to open their garage door manually. In reaction, the State of California introduced and signed into law Senate Bill 969 on September 21, 2018, requiring all new garage door and garage door opener installations to include garage door openers equipped with battery backup technology designed to operate in the event of an electrical outage. The law will go into effect on July 1, 2019

Senate Bill 969 Facts

- This law will go into effect on July 1, 2019.
- This law applies to new garage door and garage door opener installations. Homeowners will need to install a battery backup opener when a new door is installed or when they replace their existing opener. Existing openers currently in use will not need to be replaced with battery backup openers unless the door is being replaced.
- On or after July 1, 2019, no person, corporation, or entity shall manufacture for sale in this state, sell, offer for sale at retail or wholesale, or install in this state a residential automatic garage door opener that does not have a battery backup function that is designed to operate when activated because of an electrical outage. Failure to follow this will result in a civil penalty of \$1 ,000 per opener installed and operational.

Understand your garage door opener's safety features. In accordance with UL standards, all garage door openers are required to have a safety release device – a red cord that hangs down from the track inside the garage– that manually disconnects the opener from the door in case of an emergency or power outage. Pulling the release cord and manually opening the garage door can prove to be challenging for the elderly or people with disabilities, which is why having a garage door opener with battery backup can be helpful. We recommend testing this safety feature before an emergency happens to make sure you are able to manually disconnect and open your garage door.

Check to see if your current garage door opener has battery backup. If it is a LiftMaster or Chamberlain Garage Door Opener, it will say "Battery Backup" on the opener. Having a garage door opener with functioning battery backup will enable the garage door opener to open and close the garage door when the power is out. Understanding how your battery backup system works is important. For example, a brand new, fully charged LiftMaster or Chamberlain battery will open and close a garage door a limited number of times for up to 24 hours after a power disruption. To test your garage door opener with battery backup, unplug the opener and open and close the garage door with the remote control or wall control panel. Remember to plug the opener back in once you have tested the battery backup to avoid draining the battery.