



Portable Generator Safety Tips

In an emergency, portable electric generators offer lifesaving benefits when outages affect your home or business. They can safely power important electrical equipment such as portable heating units, computers, water pumps, freezers, refrigerators and lighting. However, portable generator use can also be very hazardous. If you plan on using an emergency generator, it's essential that you take precautions for your safety and the safety of those working to restore power.

The most effective way to avoid portable generator mishaps is to make sure you fully understand the proper operating procedures. Read and follow the manufacturer's guidelines before operating or maintaining your generator – and don't forget to use common sense.

Follow these tips for safe portable generator use:

- Always read and follow the manufacturer's operating instructions before running generator
- Engines emit carbon monoxide. Never use a generator inside your home, garage, crawl space, or other enclosed areas. Fatal fumes can build up, that neither a fan nor open doors and windows can provide enough fresh air.
- Only use your generator outdoors, away from open windows, vents, or doors.
- Use a battery-powered carbon monoxide detector in the area you're running a generator.
- Gasoline and its vapors are extremely flammable. Allow the generator engine to cool at least 2 minutes before refueling and always use fresh gasoline. If you do not plan to use your generator in 30 days, don't forget to stabilize the gas with fuel stabilizer.
- Maintain your generator according to the manufacturer's maintenance schedule for peak performance and safety.
- Never operate the generator near combustible materials.
- If you have to use extension cords, be sure they are of the grounded type and are rated for the application. Coiled cords can get extremely hot; always uncoil cords and lay them in flat open locations.
- Never plug your generator directly into your home outlet. If you are connecting a generator into your home electrical system, have a qualified electrician install a Power Transfer Switch.
- Generators produce powerful voltage - Never operate under wet conditions. Take precautions to protect your generator from exposure to rain and snow.