

GENERATOR SAFETY TIPS

- Never connect a generator directly to your home's wiring unless your home has been wired for generator use. This can cause backfeeding along power lines and electrocute anyone coming in contact with them, including lineworkers making repairs.
- To prevent back feed, standby generators should have a transfer safety switch installed by a professional and portable generators should never be plugged directly into a home outlet or electrical system – use an extension cord to plug appliances into an outlet on the generator to power them.
- Always plug appliances directly into generators. Connecting the generator to your home's circuits or wiring must be done by a qualified, licensed electrician who will install a transfer switch to prevent backfeeding.
- Ensure your generator is properly grounded, and use heavy-duty, outdoor-rated extension cords. Make sure extension cords are free of cuts or tears and the plug has three prongs. Overloaded cords can cause fires or equipment damage.
- There should be nothing plugged into the generator when you turn it on. This prevents a surge from damaging your generator and appliances.
- Never overload a generator. A portable generator should only be used when necessary to power essential equipment or appliances.
- Shut down the generator properly. Before shutting down a generator, turn off and unplug all appliances and equipment being powered by the generator.
- Keep the generator dry. Generators pose electrical risks especially when operated in wet conditions. Use a generator only when necessary when the weather creates wet or moist conditions. Protect the generator by operating it under an open, canopy-like structure on a dry surface where water cannot form puddles or drain under it. Always ensure that your hands are dry before touching the generator.
- Never fuel a generator while it is operating, and remember to always have a fully charged fire extinguisher nearby.
- Read and follow all manufacturer's instructions for safe operation. Be sure you understand them before hooking up the generator. Never cut corners when it comes to safety.
- Never operate a generator in a confined area, such as a garage. Generators can produce numerous gases, including toxic and deadly carbon monoxide. They require proper ventilation. Be sure to keep children and pets away from the generator, which could burn them. Remember maintenance between uses. It is also a good idea to inspect the fuel and oil filters, spark plug, oil level and fuel quality and to start the generator on a regular basis before an emergency occurs.

