



The Office of Fire Safety and Injury Prevention Education

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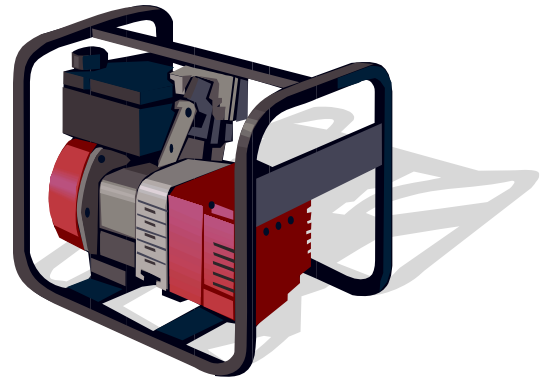
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Portable Generator Safety

The most common dangers involving generators are carbon monoxide (CO) poisoning, electrical shock or electrocution and fire hazards. CO deaths associated with generators have spiked in recent years as generator sales have risen. Generators were associated with 6 CO deaths in 1999. That number rose to approximately 75 CO deaths a year in 2005 and 2006.

Follow these safety guidelines:

- Generators should be operated in well ventilated locations outdoors away from all doors, windows and vent openings.
- The generator should be located so that exhaust fumes cannot enter the home through windows, doors or other building openings.
- Battery-operated CO alarms or plug-in CO alarms with a battery back-up should be installed in the home, according to the manufacturer's installation instructions. Should CO enter the home and pose a risk, an alarm will sound.
- The generator must not be refueled while it is running. The generator should be turned off and allowed to cool down before refueling.
- Fuel for the generator should never be stored in the home. Gasoline and other flammable liquids should be stored outside of living areas in properly labeled safety containers. They should be stored away from any fuel-burning appliance such as a gas hot water heater.
- Appliances should be plugged directly into the generator or a heavy duty outdoor-rated extension cord. The cord should be checked for cuts or tears and that the plug has all three prongs, especially a grounding pin. The house wiring should not be powered by plugging the generator into a wall outlet.
- If the generator must be connected to the house wiring to power appliances, a qualified electrician should install a properly rated transfer switch in accordance with the National Electrical Code® (NEC) and all applicable state and local electrical codes.



With these precautions, help us meet the goal of decreasing the number of portable generator accidents in our community.

Fact Sheet