



Generators and Carbon Monoxide

A Reminder of the Hazard

Each year, many people die from the odorless, colorless gas known as carbon monoxide, especially when using portable generators¹. The most recent hurricane to strike Louisiana, Hurricane Laura, was a stark reminder of this unfortunate reality; of the fifteen storm-related deaths, eight were directly attributed to the improper use of portable generators.²

While many Americans are aware of the harmful effects of carbon monoxide; few heed the safety instructions that are provided by the manufacturers of portable generators. Listed below are a few common safety tips offered by Consumer Reports when operating generators.¹

- Always read, understand and follow the instructions provided by the manufacturer.
- Do not run a generator in an enclosed space or indoors.
- Always direct the exhaust away from an occupied building.
- Keep the generator at least 20 feet from buildings.
- Do not run a portable generator in the rain; instead, keep them shielded while maintaining ventilation.
- Turn off a generator before you refuel it and let it cool down.
- Store extra gasoline in ANSI approved containers and in a cool, well-ventilated area.
- Never back feed your house, instead install a transfer switch before the next storm.
- Use extension cords rated for the load and environment.
- Consider purchasing a generator with built-in CO safety technology. Click [here](#) to learn more.

As always, please reach out to your designated Safety Specialist with any questions or concerns.

References:

¹https://www.consumerreports.org/generators/generator-safety-tips-to-get-you-through-a-storm/?EXTKEY=NA09NHN1&utm_source=acxiom&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=20200909_nsitr_home

²<https://www.npr.org/2020/09/01/908515238/majority-of-hurricane-laura-deaths-linked-to-improper-use-of-portable-generators>

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