



KNOWING THE DANGERS
OF CARBON MONOXIDE POISONING FROM
PORTABLE ELECTRIC GENERATORS COULD
SAVE YOUR LIFE

The U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC) indicated that 179 carbon monoxide poisoning deaths associated with portable generators were reported in the years from 1990 to 2002.

ABOUT 40% OF ALL PORTABLE
generator related deaths occurred during the winter months when homeowners often need an extra power boost due to weather related outages.

ALMOST 70% OF DEATHS
related to portable power generators occur at home, often with the generator operating in the basement, crawl space, garage or enclosed carport of owners seeking convenience without considering safety.

Visit www.electrical-safety.org for more information on electrical hazards and precautions.

About ESFI

The Electrical Safety Foundation International (ESFI) is dedicated exclusively to promoting electrical safety. ESFI is a 501(c)(3) organization funded by electrical manufacturers and distributors, independent testing laboratories, utilities, safety and consumer groups, and trade and labor associations. ESFI sponsors National Electrical Safety Month each May, and engages in public education campaigns and proactive media relations to help reduce property damage, personal injury and death due to electrical accidents.

For additional electrical safety information, visit the Foundation's website at www.electrical-safety.org or call (703) 841 3229.

Electrical safety tips are available at the Electrical Safety Foundation International's website, at www.electrical-safety.org, or call (703) 841 3229. For news and information on electrical manufacturers, visit NEMA at www.nema.org



Electrical Safety Foundation International
1300 N. 17th St., Suite 1752
Rosslyn, VA 22209
Phone: 703.841.3229 / Fax 703.841.3329
E-mail: info@esfi.org
Web: www.electrical-safety.org

PORTABLE GENERATOR SAFETY

UNDERSTANDING THE RISKS



WWW.ELECTRICAL-SAFETY.ORG

Portable electric generators provide a good source of power during electrical outages, but if improperly installed or operated, can become deadly. The Electrical Safety Foundation International (ESFI) urges consumers to become more knowledgeable about electrical safety. These precautions can help keep you and your family safe from carbon monoxide poisoning and electrical shock from portable electric generators.



ESFI STRONGLY RECOMMENDS

licensed electricians to install home generators to make sure it meets local codes.

Opening doors and windows or operating fans to ventilate will not prevent CO build-up in the home. Even with a CO alarm, you should NEVER use a gasoline-powered generator inside your home or in a garage.

Use your generator safely:

- Do not connect generators directly to household wiring without an appropriate transfer switch installed. Power from generators connected directly to household wiring can backfeed along power lines and electrocute anyone coming in contact with them, including lineworkers making repairs. Other tips include:
 - Make sure your generator is properly grounded.
 - Keep the generator dry.
 - Make sure extension cords used with generators are rated for the load, and are free of cuts, worn insulation, and have three-pronged plugs.
 - Do not overload the generator. A portable generator should be used only when necessary, and only to power essential equipment or appliances.
 - Never operate the generator in enclosed or

partially enclosed spaces. Use carbon monoxide detectors in nearby enclosed spaces to monitor levels. Generators can produce high levels of carbon monoxide very quickly, which can be deadly.

- Use a ground fault circuit interrupter (GFCI) to help prevent electrocutions and electrical shock injuries.
- Turn off all appliances powered by the generator before shutting down the generator.
- Keep children away from portable generators at all times.
- Make sure fuel for the generator is stored safely, away from living areas, in properly labeled containers, and away from fuel-burning appliances. Before re-fueling, always turn the generator off and let it cool down.

Electricity is a powerful tool. It can also be a lethal hazard. Better safety standards have reduced electrical hazards that cause deaths, injuries and property damage. But good safety habits are still the best prevention against electrical hazards.