

Power Your Way Through Summer

Tips for safe portable generator use

(Family Features) As temperatures rise, there are more and more reasons you may find yourself in need of electricity. From weather-related emergencies that leave your home without power to camping or tailgating, where electricity adds convenience, you can keep the power at all times with a portable generator.



When temporary or remote electric power is needed, portable generators can provide flexibility and comfort when power is not otherwise readily available. When power fails, they can provide reassuring light to a storm-darkened house, restore operation to power necessary equipment and allow you to operate climate control devices such as fans and space heaters.

At the campground, a portable generator can bring the comforts of home by powering a wide range of devices such as radios and fans. Similarly, a tailgate can become a more elaborate celebration when a generator is fueling the fun with festive lighting and quick, easy grilling.

“Although portable generators make it more convenient to enjoy some of our favorite pastimes and ease the burden of unexpected power outages, there are some risks,” said Susan Orenga, representative for the Portable Generator Manufacturers’ Association (PGMA). “Proper handling and taking the appropriate safety precautions can help ensure that users fully appreciate the benefits of portable power.”

One of the greatest risks associated with portable generator use is carbon monoxide, a gas you cannot smell, see or taste. The engine exhaust from these devices contains this gas, which can have fatal consequences for people and animals that are exposed to excess levels.

Using portable generators safely and appropriately at all times can help avoid carbon monoxide poisoning. Remember to:

- Never run a portable generator indoors or in partially-enclosed spaces like garages, porches, breezeways or tents, even if using fans or opening doors and windows for ventilation. Carbon monoxide can build up and linger for hours, even after the generator has shut off.
- Always place a portable generator downwind and point the engine exhaust away from occupied spaces, such as a campsite or tailgate area.
- Get to fresh air immediately and call 911 for emergency medical attention if you feel sick, dizzy or weak while using your portable generator.
- Install a battery-operated carbon monoxide alarm according to manufacturer’s instructions.

- Always refer to the generator owner's manual for further information about safe operation and potential hazards.

By learning how to properly operate your portable generator, you and your family can safely avoid the inconvenience of power outages and enjoy hours of fun this summer. Learn more at www.pgmaonline.com.

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