

# Generator safety

Protect yourself • your neighbors • and our crews



Generators can come in handy if the power goes out during a storm. But it's important to use them properly to keep yourself, your neighbors and our employees safe.

**Always follow the manufacturer's instructions** when operating a generator to prevent injury, fire or carbon monoxide poisoning.

## Prevent backfeed

Backfeed occurs when power is sent back through your home's electrical lines in reverse, creating a dangerous level of electricity that puts our crews at risk of severe injury or death.

### Permanent generators:

Make sure an electrician installs a power transfer switch before using a permanent generator. Transfer switches allow you to choose between utility power or backup generator power.

### Portable generators:

Never connect generators directly to your home's wiring or plug into a wall outlet. Consult with a licensed electrician before using.



## Carbon monoxide awareness

- **Keep portable generators at least 20 ft. away from your home.**
- **Never operate a generator inside your home** or in other enclosed or partially enclosed spaces, including garages.
- **Always operate away from doors, windows and vents.**
- **Direct the exhaust away from your home.**
- **Symptoms of carbon monoxide poisoning include** dizziness, headaches, nausea and fatigue

## Portable generator safety tips

- **Use a heavy-duty extension cord** designed for outdoor use to connect appliances to the generator. Make sure the extension cord is free of cuts or tears and has a wattage rating that exceeds the total wattage of items plugged in.
- **DO NOT plug a generator into a wall outlet**, your home's breaker panel or where electric service enters your house. This may bypass your home's built-in circuit protection devices, puts your appliances and electronics at risk of damage, and puts our employees and your neighbors at risk of shock or electrocution.
- **Follow safety guidelines** when you handle and store generator fuel.
- **More safety tips at [www.esfi.org](http://www.esfi.org).**