

Generator Safety

Personal electric generators are a good source of power for heat, light, refrigeration and cooking during electrical outages. But, if generators are improperly installed or operated, they can become deadly. If you connect a generator to your electrical panel without a transfer switch or GenerLink™ collar to isolate the circuits, it's simply a disaster waiting to happen. A generator that is connected to the electrical panel can energize the power lines to 7,200 volts or higher, whether the lines are on the ground or in the air. If your generator is not isolated from the NNEC distribution system, the transformer at your location acts in reverse and can actually step-up the normal household voltage to the Cooperative's primary system voltage. If your generator energizes power lines, it can produce enough energy to kill anyone coming in contact with it. Energized lines are a safety hazard to you, your family, emergency personnel, pedestrians and



the NNEC linemen working to restore power. Safety rules for operation of generators include:

- Do not operate the generator in enclosed or partially enclosed spaces, including homes, garages and basements. Generators produce high levels of carbon monoxide gas very quickly; a colorless, odorless, deadly gas.
- Keep the generator dry. To protect it from moisture, operate the generator on a dry surface under an open canopy-like structure.
- Plug appliances directly into the generator. Use a heavy-duty outdoor extension cord that is rated in watts or amps equal or greater to the sum of the connected appliances.
- Do not connect your generator directly to your household wiring, as it can back feed along the power lines and electrocute anyone coming in contact with the lines. Have a qualified electrician install a transfer switch or have NNEC install a GenerLink™ collar.
- Keep children away from portable generators at all times.
- Do not overload the generator. A portable generator should be used only when necessary, and only to power essential equipment or appliances. Make sure the generator is properly grounded.
- Make sure the 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.
- Turn off all appliances powered by the generator before shutting it down.
- Do not attempt to repair an electric generator; only qualified servicemen should perform repairs.
- Do not remove or tamper with safety devices; they are there to protect you and your property.
- Follow the manufacturer's instructions for safe operation and maintenance.