

# Being Prepared



## Home Generators: Portable, Convenient and Potentially Dangerous!

At McMinnville Water & Light, our goal is to provide you with highly reliable electric service, and 99.9 percent of the time we do. However, occasional power outages do occur.

If you want the added peace of mind, you might consider installing a generator.

Here are some guidelines for safely connecting and operating portable generators:

Don't connect your generator directly to your home's wiring.

Connecting a portable electric generator directly to your household wiring can be deadly to you and others. A generator that is directly connected to your home's wiring can 'back feed' into the power lines connected to your home. Utility transformers can then "step-up" or increase this back feed to thousands of volts, enough to kill a utility

lineworker making outage repairs a long way from your house. You could also cause expensive damage to utility equipment and your generator. The only safe way to connect a portable electric generator to your existing wiring is to have a licensed electrical contractor install a transfer switch. A transfer switch safely isolates your generator from



the utility power lines.

Don't overload the generator by operating more appliances and equipment than the output rating of the generator. Overloading your generator can seriously damage your valuable appliances and electronics. Prioritize your

needs. A portable electric generator should be used only when necessary, and only to power essential equipment.

Never use a generator indoors or in an attached garage. Just like your automobile, a portable generator uses an internal combustion engine that emits deadly carbon monoxide. Be sure to place the generator where exhaust fumes will not enter the house. Only operate it outdoors in a well-ventilated, dry area, away from air intakes to the home, and protected from direct exposure to rain and snow.

Prevent electrical shock by making sure your generator is properly grounded. Don't cut corners when it comes to safety. Carefully read and observe all instructions in your portable electric generator's owner manual.