



Be Prepared to Weather the Storm

(Family Features) For many people, inclement weather can be frightening. When the wind is blowing, the rain is pouring and the trees are rustling, it can be hard to remain calm. However, it's important to remember certain safety tips and how to use tools properly in case of emergency.

Having a plan in place before a storm, hurricane or tornado hits can help make sure everyone is on the same page and ensure safety in the event of a sudden power outage. Portable generators can serve many purposes after severe weather strikes, including providing power needed for safe food storage, hot water, lights, radios and televisions. However, portable generators emit potentially deadly carbon monoxide – which is a tasteless, colorless, odorless gas – making it vital to keep safety in mind when using one as a backup power source around your house or near family members.

The Portable Generator Manufacturers' Association recommends these tips for being informed of potential hazards and safely operating equipment in the event of a storm or natural disaster:

- Never run a portable generator indoors or in partially enclosed spaces.
- Always direct the engine exhaust away from occupied structures.
- Be aware that you cannot smell, see or taste carbon monoxide so proper use of portable generators is crucial.
- If you feel sick, dizzy or weak while using your portable generator, get to fresh air immediately and call 911 for emergency medical attention.
- Always refer to your generator owner's manual for further information about safe operation and potential hazards.
- To avoid dangerous carbon monoxide accumulation, always "Take It Outside," which means never running a portable generator indoors, such as in garages, basements, crawl spaces, breezeways, sheds or other partially enclosed spaces.

Although it is impossible to completely eliminate the safety hazards associated with improper generator use, new models that comply with the ANSI/PGMA G300 - 2018 standard offer enhanced safety through carbon monoxide sensors and shut-off features that help protect against carbon monoxide accumulation.

Always be aware of your surroundings and educate yourself on how to properly use necessary tools and equipment in case of a storm. Learn more about safe portable generator usage at pgmaonline.com or takeyourgeneratoroutside.com.

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