

January 25, 2011

Information Bulletin

Generator Safety

Downed utility lines, power company blackouts, heavy snow falls or summer storms can all lead to power outages. Many people turn to a portable generator for a temporary solution without knowing the risks.

- Generators should be used in well ventilated locations outside away from all doors, windows and vent openings.
- Never use a generator in an attached garage, even with the door open.
- Place generators so that exhaust fumes can't enter the home through windows, doors or other openings in the building.
- Make sure to install carbon monoxide (CO) alarms in your home. Follow manufacturer's instructions for correct placement and mounting height.
- Turn off generators and let them cool down before refueling. Never refuel a generator while it is running.
- Make sure to store fuel for the generator in a container that is intended for the purpose and is correctly labeled as such.
- Make sure to store fuel containers outside of living areas.
- When plugging in appliances, make sure they are plugged directly into the generator or a heavy duty outdoor-rated extension cord.
- The cords should be checked for cuts, tears and that the plug has all three prongs, especially a grounding pin.
- If you must connect the generator to the house wiring to power appliances, have a qualified electrician install a properly rated transfer switch in accordance with the National Electrical Code® (NEC) and all applicable state and local electrical codes.

No person shall make connections from a utility, source of energy, fuel or power to any building or system that is regulated by this code for which a permit is required, until released by the building official. (California Building Code Section 112)

Alternating current systems of 50 volts to 1000 volts that supply premises wiring and premises wiring systems shall be grounded

Fact: CO deaths associated with generators have spiked in recent years as generator sales have increased.