

KALISPELL FIRE DEPARTMENT

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PORTABLE 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.

FACT

Carbon Monoxide deaths associated with generators have spiked in recent years as generator sales have risen.

- 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.
- 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.
- Store fuel for the generator in a container that is intended for the purpose and is correctly labeled as such. Store the containers outside of living areas.