



Digitize, Automate Safety Toolbox Talks, & Save Time.

## Topic: Generator Safety for Winter Heating

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Team / Department: \_\_\_\_\_

Talk Conducted By: \_\_\_\_\_

Winter is upon us, and for many, that means the temperature drops, and the use of generators becomes more frequent. Generators can provide warmth and power during outages caused by winter storms, but they also come with significant safety concerns. Understanding how to use them safely is key to preventing accidents and ensuring a warm, safe environment for everyone.

## Understanding Generators

Generators are versatile machines that can help during power outages or when extra energy is needed. However, improper use can lead to serious safety issues, including carbon monoxide poisoning.

## Key Safety Tips

Let's break down the essential safety practices when using generators, especially during the winter months:

- **Always Use Outdoors:** Generators emit carbon monoxide (CO), which can be deadly if inhaled. It's critical to use them outside, far away from doors and windows to prevent fumes from entering your building.
- **Proper Ventilation:** Make sure the area around the generator is well-ventilated. If windows or doors are open, the air flow can help disperse harmful gases.
- **Check the Fuel:** Use the correct type of fuel as specified by the manufacturer. Storing improper fuel can lead to fire hazards.
- **Extension Cords:** If you need to use extension cords, ensure they're rated for the wattage of the generator and suitable for outdoor use.
- **Use Ground Fault Circuit Interrupters (GFCIs):** These devices protect against electrical shock by cutting off power when a ground fault is detected.

## Winter-Specific Considerations

Winter brings unique challenges when using generators that require careful attention.

- **Cold Weather Preparation:** Before using a generator in cold weather, check that it’s properly maintained. An engine might have trouble starting in freezing temperatures, so keeping it in a warm, dry place before use can help.
- **Fuel Type and Stability:** Different fuels behave differently in the cold. For instance, gasoline can gel in lower temperatures, making it difficult to start the generator. Consider using fuel additives designed for winter conditions.
- **Snow and Ice Hazards:** Keep the area around the generator clear of snow and ice. This prevents blockages and helps maintain the equipment’s efficiency.

## Awareness of Surroundings

Being aware of your environment is an important aspect of generator safety. Think about the following:

- **Children and Pets:** Ensure that kids and pets are kept a safe distance from the generator. Discuss the dangers associated with it beforehand.
- **Listen for Alerts:** If you notice unusual sounds or smells coming from the generator, it’s crucial to cut off power and investigate.
- **Check for Overloading:** Make sure not to overload the generator. Prioritize essential appliances to avoid strain on the unit.

## What To Do in Case of an Emergency

Awareness is important, but knowing how to respond is equally crucial.

- **Carbon Monoxide Detector:** Equip your home with carbon monoxide detectors, especially near sleeping areas. Regularly check to ensure they are functioning.
- **Emergency Plan:** Develop a plan that includes emergency contacts, shelter options, and communication strategies if the generator is being used during a storm.
- **Seek Medical Attention:** In case of suspected carbon monoxide exposure—such as headache, dizziness, or nausea—immediately seek fresh air and get medical help.

## Conclusion: Stay warm and safe

As winter sets in, it's important to remind ourselves of the safety practices that apply when using generators. Following these guidelines can reduce the risk of accidents and ensure that warmth and comfort are safely provided during cold months.

Stay safe out there, and remember that being proactive is the best way to avoid any accidents this winter!

## Attendees:

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