

Risk Alert



Listening. | Learning. | Leading.®

Plan to use a generator? Stop and read these tips

When power outages occur, many houses of worship turn to backup generators as a means to temporarily restore power. Improper installation of these generators can cause fires, property damage and serious injuries or deaths due to carbon monoxide poisoning or electrocution.

Follow proper precautions when using portable generators. Fully read and understand the manufacturer's instructions and consult a licensed electrician whenever possible. Do not connect the generator directly into a wall outlet. This is known as backfeeding and it can cause an electrocution risk to utility employees working to restore power and others served by the same utility transformer.

Connecting the Generator

There are two safe methods to connect your generator: employ a licensed electrical contractor to connect the generator with a transfer switch, or connect essential appliances directly into the outlets mounted on the generator using properly rated extension cords. Improperly installed generators can feed electricity into power lines outside your house of worship and cause an electrocution risk.

Location

Never use a generator indoors or in an area where carbon monoxide combustion gas could build up. This includes basements, attached garages, crawlspaces, or locations adjacent to open windows and doors. Check that the exhaust is directed away from the building. Do not use a generator in the rain or wet conditions unless approved by the manufacturer. Keep children and pets away from electrical generators at all times and always stay clear of downed power lines.

Grounding

You must properly ground your generator. Follow the manufacturer's recommendations for proper grounding requirements.

Don't Overload Generators

Most generators do not have the capacity to power everything in your facility. Prioritize your needs and use your generator to power only essential equipment. Overloading could cause the generator to fail and damage sensitive electrical equipment.

(Over)

Power Cords

When using extension cords to power appliances, only use heavy-duty outdoor rated power cords with an adequate wire gauge (rating). Overloading cords can cause fires and/or equipment damage. The cords should be free of damage and have three prongs.

Fuel

Never store fuel for your generator in the building or near a fuel burning appliance, such as a natural gas water heater in a garage. Before refueling a generator, turn it off and let it cool down. Gasoline spilled on a hot engine could ignite and cause damage.

For a complete collection of the *Risk Alert* series, visit our website and look in the Safety Resources section.



Hartford Steam Boiler

The Hartford Steam Boiler Inspection and Insurance Company
www.hsb.com