

Generator Safety

BUYING A STANDBY GENERATOR:

Buying a standby generator is like buying fire insurance—you may never need it, but it is invaluable when trouble hits. Although your electrical system is highly dependable and reliable, it is subject to the whims of Mother Nature. How well are you prepared to handle a prolonged outage? How will you heat your home and keep foods from spoiling?

Now is the time to inventory your electrical needs. Assume you will experience long outages that could cause you inconvenience and financial loss. Standby generators are not normally stocked in any quantity, so don't plan on buying one after an outage occurs.

FOR OVERALL SAFE USE OF GENERATORS:

Be certain that it has been installed following the Massachusetts and National Electric Safety Codes – have your local wire inspector check the installation to ensure compliance.

Be certain that when you use your generator the main breaker is off and/or there is a manual disconnect from the NSTAR grid.

Sources: American Red Cross Publication #1098; NSTAR Community Relations Department. Reprinted from Cape Cod Emergency Preparedness Handbook

Never connect generators to another power source such as power lines. Never connect it to your home's electrical system.

Always follow the manufacturer's instructions and guidelines. Know your equipment. Thoroughly read all operating and maintenance instructions before use.

Always use and maintain generators properly.

Always refuel generators outdoors. Do not attempt to fill the gas tank while the generator is operating.

Always use the appropriate size and type of power cord to carry the electric load.

Never run cords under rugs or carpets where heat might build up or damage to a cord may go unnoticed.

Connect appliances directly to the generator itself with properly sized power cords.

Provide adequate ventilation for toxic exhaust.

Provide a cooling airflow for the machine.

Keep children as far away from the generator as possible. Teach them to stay away from the generator.

Town of Bourne

Emergency Management



Power Outages and Generator Safety

Local Emergency Planning
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Power outages can be very frustrating and troublesome, especially when they are prolonged.



ALWAYS consider all downed lines energized and Dangerous!

Stay alert – don't get hurt.

First – Stay safe. Keep yourself and others away.

Second – Call 9-1-1 immediately (your local emergency services can contact NSTAR directly). Or, report the location to NSTAR at 1-800-592-2000.

Safety After the Storm

If a power line has fallen on the vehicle you are in, remain in the vehicle until help arrives. Do not attempt to pull away. A cellular phone may be used to call 911 for help.

Stay clear of all fallen tree limbs and wires as well as anything they are touching - such as puddles and metal fences.

- Notify local fire, police, and electric utility officials about downed power lines.
- Do not enter damaged buildings with flame lanterns, candles or lighted cigarettes because there may be gas leaks.
- If possible, stay off the road. If you have to drive, watch out for trees and wires in the roadway. Do not drive across a downed power line. Treat all non-working traffic lights as stop signs and proceed cautiously at intersections.
- Try to keep people and traffic away from downed power lines until officials arrive.

SAVING YOUR PERISHABLE FOOD

Perishable food should not be held above 40 degrees Fahrenheit for more than 2 hours. If a power outage is 2 hours or less, you need

not be concerned, but how do you save your food when the refrigerator is out for longer times? Being prepared can help. By planning ahead, you can save your perishables.

What do I need?

- Coolers. Inexpensive Styrofoam coolers can do an excellent job as well.
- Ice. Surrounding your food with ice in a cooler will ensure that it will stay cold.
- Shelf-stable foods – such as canned goods and powdered or boxed milk – can be eaten cold or heated on the grill.
- A digital quick-response thermometer can quickly tell you the internal temperatures of food for doneness and safety.

WHAT TO DO?

Do not open the refrigerator or freezer. An unopened door will keep food cold enough for a couple of hours at least. A freezer that is half full will hold adequate temperature for up to 24 hours and a full freezer for 48 hours. If it looks like the power outage will be for more than 2-4 hours, pack all refrigerated milk, dairy, meats, fish, eggs, etc. in your cooler surrounded by ice. If it looks like the power outage will be prolonged, prepare a cooler with ice for your freezer items.