

## Generator Safety

Keep these things in mind when using a portable generator:

- Make certain the generator is on an isolated circuit. If connected to your home's wiring, it could back-feed and create a life-threatening situation for linemen working on power lines.
- Read the manufacturer's instructions and learn how to operate and shut off your generator before you need to use it.
- Make sure the extension cord you use is in good shape and rated for a load greater than the total wattage of all connected appliances and other devices (125 volts x amps = watts).
- Keep the generator dry, and don't operate it indoors or in an enclosed or partially enclosed area such as a garage or porch. Generators quickly can produce high levels of deadly carbon monoxide gas.
- Keep children and pets away from the generator when it's running.
- Practice power management. For example, when the power is out for several hours or longer, use the generator to run the refrigerator every few hours so food won't spoil – instead of just powering lights in your home all day long.
- Give your generator several breaks during the day. Most portable generators aren't designed to run 24/7, so shut down your unit several times a day to let it cool down.
- Always switch the engine off and allow it to cool before adding fuel in a well-ventilated area. Take care not to contaminate the fuel tank with dirt or water.
- Turn off the generator's circuit breaker before starting, so the load doesn't draw current until the generator is running smoothly. Turn off the breaker before stopping the generator.
- Test the ground fault circuit interrupter (GFCI) on the generator every time you fire up the engine.