

ELECTRIC GENERATOR SAFETY

Follow these guidelines to make sure that your generator is working safely

Some customers prepare for the possibility of power outages by buying an electric generator as a standby system to keep lights and appliances running until service is restored.

A generator may be able to help save food in your refrigerator or freezer during a prolonged outage, let you keep your home office running, or power other essential equipment. Generators can be expensive and noisy. **They can also pose serious safety hazards to you and to others, so please follow all safety instructions provided by the manufacturer.**

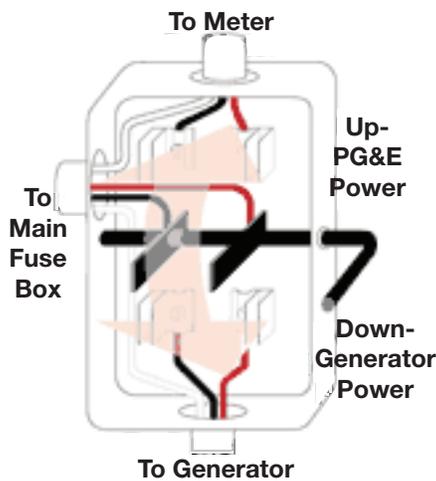
The law requires that customers with a permanently installed or portable generator do not connect it to another power source, such as PG&E's power lines. If you own and operate a generator, you are responsible for making sure that electricity from your unit cannot **"backfeed,"** or flow into PG&E's power lines. For safety's sake, be sure to use your generator correctly. If you do not, you risk damaging your property and endangering your life and the lives of PG&E line workers who may be working on power lines some distance from your home.



Permanent Standby Generators

When a generator is permanently connected to a customer's electric system, it energizes the building's wiring. This type of installation requires a device that prevents the generator from being connected to PG&E's power lines. **Only a qualified professional, such as a licensed electric contractor, should install a permanent standby generator.**

continued on next page



Follow these safety tips:

- A double-pole, double-throw transfer switch (see above) is the recommended device to keep your generator from backfeeding into PG&E's system. The switch also keeps PG&E's power from re-energizing your house wiring while your generator is running, protecting your generator, wiring and appliances from damage when your service is restored.
- Have all additions to your house wiring inspected by your city or county building department.
- When installation is complete, call PG&E to let us know about your back-up system. We will make a note in our records to remind our workers of your generator if they are working on an outage in your area. In some cases, PG&E line workers may ask to check your electric generator transfer switch for safety.
- If you already have a permanently installed standby generator but you don't know if it's installed properly, call your local building inspector or a licensed contractor for help.

You are responsible for any injuries or damage to your property, your neighbors' or PG&E's, from an improperly installed or operated generator.

Portable Generators

Portable generators are designed to be connected only to selected appliances or lamps. These generators never should be connected directly to a building's wiring system.

- Before starting your generator, carefully read and follow all of the manufacturer's instructions.
- Be sure that the total electric load on your generator will not exceed the manufacturer's rating.
- Always locate your generator where its exhaust will vent safely.
- Prioritize your needs. Use the lowest wattage light bulbs that provide a safe level of light, reserving power for additional lighting elsewhere or a small appliance. Remember that the greater the load on your generator, the more fuel it will use.
- Keep cords out of the way so they don't present a tripping hazard—especially in dimly lit doorways or halls. Never run cords under rugs or carpets where heat might build up or damage to a cord may go unnoticed.
- Extension cords must be properly sized to carry the electric load. Overloaded cords can overheat and cause fires or damage to equipment.