



# Safety Tips: **Generators and Carbon Monoxide**

## **Generators**

A generator is useful when you lose power, but you have to be careful when you have one. If you don't use it correctly, it can be dangerous.

This factsheet tells you about the dangers and how to use a generator safely.

## **Buying a Generator**

Buy a generator that is rated for the amount of power that you think you will need. Look at the labels on the lights, appliances and equipment you plan to connect to the generator. This will tell you how much power you need to keep those things running.

Know about the dangers a generator can create:

- carbon monoxide poisoning from the engine exhaust
- electric shock
- fire

## **How to stay safe**

- Follow the directions that come with the generator.
- Only use a generator outdoors.
- Turn the generator off and let it cool down before you add fuel.
- Plug appliances directly into the generator or use a heavy-duty, outdoor-rated extension cord.

## **Carbon monoxide**

Carbon monoxide is an odourless, colourless gas. It can make you sick very quickly or you could die if you breathe it in.

If you think someone has carbon monoxide poisoning, talk to a doctor or call 911 right away.

Carbon monoxide is in the fumes of small gasoline engines, stoves, generators, lanterns and gas ranges. It's also in the smoke of burning charcoal and wood.

If you use these items indoors or in enclosed spaces, the carbon monoxide can build to dangerous levels. It can cause dizziness, headache, weakness, nausea, vomiting (sick to your stomach), chest pain, and confusion.

Every home should have at least 1 working carbon monoxide detector. Check the detector's batteries each time you check your smoke detector batteries.

## **How to stay safe**

- Never use a gas range or oven to heat your home.
- Never use a charcoal grill, hibachi, lantern or portable camping stove inside a house, camper, or tent.
- Only use a professionally installed and vented generator inside a house, basement, or garage.