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PORTABLE GENERATOR SAFETY TIPS

TRENTON, N.J. – New Jersey Department of Community Affairs (DCA) Commissioner Richard E. Constable, III and Acting State Fire Marshal William Kramer, Jr. warn that while portable generators can be very helpful to during power outages, it is imperative that the public follow the below safety guidelines when using one:

- Never run a generator within a basement, garage or any enclosed or partially enclosed structure as this will lead to a dangerous and often fatal accumulation of carbon monoxide. Never position a generator too close to your home's windows and doors.
- Use battery-operated carbon monoxide alarms. Test and change the batteries at regular intervals.
- Never connect a generator directly to your home's wiring unless your home has been wired for generator use. This can cause backfeeding along power lines and electrocute anyone coming in contact with them, including lineworkers making repairs. Have a licensed electrician install the equipment necessary to safely connect emergency generators to your home.
- Always plug appliances directly into generators. Connecting the generator to your home's circuits or wiring must be done by a qualified, licensed electrician who will install a transfer switch to prevent backfeeding.
- Use heavy-duty, outdoor-rated extension cords. Make sure extension cords are free of cuts or tears and the plug has three prongs. Overloaded cords can cause fires or equipment damage.
- Ensure your generator is properly grounded.
- Never overload a generator. A portable generator should only be used when necessary to power essential equipment or appliances.
- Turn off all equipment powered by the generator before shutting it down.
- Keep the generator dry. Operate it on a dry surface under an open structure.
- Always have a fully charged fire extinguisher nearby.
- Never fuel a generator while it is operating.
- Read and adhere to the manufacturer's instructions for safe operation. Never cut corners when it comes to safety.

The Division of Fire Safety serves as the central fire service agency in New Jersey. The Division is responsible for the development and enforcement of the State Uniform Fire Code, as well as for implementing public education and firefighter training programs.

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