

Using Generators for Electrical Power

Tips

- Gasoline engines produce carbon monoxide. Don't run them in an enclosed area.
- Check the oil level in the engine before using and on a regular basis (for example when refueling).
- Let the engine cool off before refueling.
- The generator should be kept a safe distance from structures because of engine heat.
- Place the generator on a level surface to keep oil at proper level in engine.
- Water will damage generators as well as produce an electrical hazard, so keep the generator dry.
- A voltage drop may occur if too long an extension cord is connected to the appliance or if one with too small a wire size is used. If the extension cord becomes very warm, it is inadequate.
- Connect the generator directly to the appliance.
- You should not try to hook generators to your electrical supply box.
- Ground the generator as stated in the instructions. If you use an extension cord, use one with a ground plug.
- Have the generator running before the A.C. circuit on the generator is turned on or before you plug in the appliance.
- An appliance that has a heating element, such as a toaster or hair dryer, consumes a large amount of current. It's best to avoid using these types of items.
- If an appliance has gotten wet or damaged, it may not be in good working order. Using the appliance may damage the generator.
- Some generators have the ability to produce 115/120 volts or 220 volts. Select the outlet that corresponds to the voltage requirement of the appliance.

Emergency generators become popular after disasters. They can help save food in freezers and refrigerators, but they also may be dangerous if not used properly.

The capacity of a generator is usually stated in watts. For example, you may have a 2,000-watt generator. This is the same as a 2-kilowatt (K.W.) generator, because 1,000 watts is equal to 1 K.W.

Watts is an electrical term determined by multiplying volts times amps. For example, if an appliance requires 120 volts and uses 10 amps, this appliance requires 1,200 watts. This information is on the nameplate of the appliance. By this formula, you can determine what you can run on your generator. For example, an appliance that requires 1,200 watts and one requiring 600 watts could be run on a 2,000-watt generator. However, appliances with motors require more current to start than they do after they are running. A suggestion is to start a refrigerator, allow it to begin running and then plug in another appliance.



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Author: Dr. Lynn Hannaman

Louisiana State University Agricultural Center
William B. Richardson, Chancellor
Louisiana Agricultural Experiment Station
David J. Boethel, Vice Chancellor and Director
Louisiana Cooperative Extension Service
Paul D. Coreil, Vice Chancellor and Director
Pub. 2949-O 6/06

Issued in furtherance of Cooperative Extension work, Acts of Congress of May 8 and June 30, 1914, in cooperation with the United States Department of Agriculture. The Louisiana Cooperative Extension Service provides equal opportunities in programs and employment.

This material is based upon work supported by the Cooperative State, Research, Education and Extension Service, U.S. Department of Agriculture, under Award No. 2006-41210-03363.