

Generator safety

ACTION CHECKLIST

Operate a portable generator outdoors at least 20 feet from doors, windows and vents, with exhaust directed away from buildings. Never run it in a home, garage or enclosed space. Use working CO alarms and never connect a generator to a wall outlet.

[] Choose outdoor placement

Keep the generator away from occupied buildings and openings, including neighbors.

[] Connect safely

Use rated cords as instructed; a building connection requires a professionally installed transfer switch.

[] Refuel safely

Shut down and let it cool before refueling. Store fuel safely outside living areas.

[] Check CO alarms

If an alarm sounds or symptoms occur, leave for fresh air and call emergency services.

WATCH FOR

An open garage door does not make indoor generator operation safe.

IF HELP IS UNAVAILABLE

If there is no safe outdoor position, do not run the generator. Use battery lights and ration stored electrical power for medical needs and communications. Do not improvise a connection to household wiring or operate it indoors because the weather is bad.

Updated 2026-10-02 | Civilian educational guidance. Seek qualified help when reachable and safe; do not delay immediate protective action.

Full guide: <https://ospreyzero.com/emergencies/generator-safety/>

Generator safety · official guidance