

## **CPSC Warns Winter Storm Victims: Use Portable Generators Outdoors Only**

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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CPSC Hotline: (800) 638-2772

CPSC Media Contact: (301) 504-7908

WASHINGTON, D.C. - The U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission is issuing a warning to consumers confronted with ice storms and severe winter weather. When there's a power outage, exercise caution when using portable generators.

Carbon monoxide (CO) is an invisible killer. You can't see or smell it. A generator's exhaust contains poisonous CO which can kill you in a matter of minutes.

Last year, at least 65 people died from generator-related CO poisoning. Many of the deaths occurred after winter storms knocked out power.

Follow these important generator safety tips:

Never use a portable generator inside a home, garage, shed or other partially enclosed space, even if doors and windows are open.

Place portable generators outside only, far away from the home. And keep the generator away from openings to the home, including doors, windows and vents.

Read the label on the generator and the owner's manual, and follow the instructions.

Install CO alarms with battery backup in the home outside each sleeping area.

Get to fresh air immediately if you start to feel sick, weak or dizzy. CO poisoning from exposure to generator exhaust can quickly lead to incapacitation and death.

Last year, CPSC mandated a new danger label on generators manufactured after May 14, 2007. The label states that, "Using a generator indoors CAN KILL YOU IN MINUTES."

CPSC has additional rulemaking underway on generators. The Commission directed staff to investigate various strategies to reduce consumers' exposure to CO and to enable and encourage them to use generators outdoors only. Those strategies include generator engines with substantially reduced CO emissions, interlocking or automatic shutoff devices, weatherization requirements, theft deterrence and noise reduction.

To see this release on CPSC's web site, please go to:

<http://www.cpsc.gov/cpsc/pub/prerel/prhtml08/08125.html>



New York State Department of State  
*Office of Fire Prevention and Control*  
41 State Street  
Albany, NY 12231-0001

- phone: (518) 474-6746
- fax: (518) 474-3240
- [fire@dos.state.ny.us](mailto:fire@dos.state.ny.us)
- <http://www.dos.state.ny.us/fire/firewww.html>